RICARDO MANUEL GONÇALVES GRILO

DE MARCA ALIADA A MARCA ATIVISTA: ESTUDO SOBRE COLEÇÕES E CAMPANHAS ARCO-ÍRIS DURANTE O MÊS DO ORGULHO LGBT

FROM THE ALLYSHIP STATUS TO BRAND ACTIVISM: A STUDY ABOUT COLLECTIONS AND RAINBOW-THEMED CAMPAIGNS DURING PRIDE MONTH

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To my old soul, Miguel do Amaral, for all his smiles and love

To my parents, Rosa e Antero, for always believing in me

To Fifi, one of my favourite people, for her craziness

To the LGBT+ community for being courageous and proud

In memory of José Carlos, "you will live forever"

You are extraordinary.

o júri

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> "I appeal to all governments and societies … to build a world where no one has to be afraid because of their sexual orientation or gender identity."
> UN Secretary-General António Guterres (May 2015)

Acknowledgement

So many names have contributed to this lifetime project and goal. These people were crucial to keeping me enthusiastic and passionate during the incredibly rough and exciting journey of doing a PhD as a working student.

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I would like to express my gratitude to my parents for letting me fly. Also, I wish to thank two special human beings: Miguel do Amaral and Fifi. You are with me since the beginning.

I dedicate this dissertation to myself for the many years of work-studying, swearing, writing marathons, and celebrating. It's been an extraordinary roller-coaster ride. The panic was worth it!

Thank you.

And remember:
Being an LGBT+ ally and activist is never an ending story.

resumo

A crescente popularidade do ativismo de marca trouxe as questões sociais para o primeiro plano da comunicação estratégica e do marketing. Defender uma causa e tornar-se fonte de alianças e ativismo cria novas oportunidades de negócio, marketing e Branding. No entanto, também pode gerar reações negativas.

O movimento LGBT é uma das escolhas possíveis para o setor privado e os profissionais de marketing e gestores, entre outros como *Me Too*, *Black Lives Matter*, *Fridays for Future* ou *Stop Asian Hate*.

O ativismo de marcas no contexto LGBT é um fenómeno recente. Esta investigação exploratória examina os esforças de marketing das marcas, através de símbolos LGBT, para celebrar o mês do Orgulho, em Junho, e participar na conversa de forma a combater a discriminação, contribuir para a equidade da comunidade e definir o setor privado como agente ativo de mudança.

A partir do paradigma do interpretativismo, e através de uma lente qualitativa, exploramos o processo de se estar disposto a juntar-se à conversa, aceder aos estatutos e construir o posicionamento estratégico de aliada e ativista, assim como celebrar o mês do Orgulho com campanhas de marketing. Realizamos 58 entrevistas e analisamos 20 marcas.

A popularidade dos filtros arco-íris em logótipos ou do lançamento de coleções e campanhas Pride pode integrar uma estratégia de comunicação alargada para a criação de marcas *LGBT-friendly* ou para ser apenas cerimonial.

O objetivo é compreender a nova relação marca-consumidor no acesso da marca a estes estatutos de aliada e ativista no contexto LGBT, ultrapassando promessas, retórica e simbolismo, e onde o propósito não é um canivete suíço.

Contribuímos para a compreensão do construto de ativismo de marca e para o desenvolvimento de um plano estratégico de cariz operacional para as marcas comprometidas com o ativismo.

As nossas conclusões sublinham a relevância de gerir promessas, expectativas e resultados, do compromisso a longo prazo, do contexto, e da autenticidade e legitimidade no diálogo das marcas com a comunidade LGBT.

O mês do Orgulho é uma via possível e não o caminho obrigatório para as marcas que ambicionam transitar de aliadas para ativistas.

keywords   allyship; strategic communication, brand activism; LGBT conversation; Pride marketing; rainbow-washing

abstract   The increasing popularity of brand activism has brought social issues to the forefront of brand communications and actions. Showing up for a cause, standing up for it, gaining ally status, and becoming an activist create new business opportunities and may lead to consumer backlash.

The LGBT movement is one of the possible choices for marketers, managers, leaders, and advertisers, from others such as Me Too, Black Lives Matter, Fridays for Future or Stop Asian Hate. However, brand activism within the LGBT context is still in its infancy.

This exploratory research examined how brands are building inclusive marketing efforts through LGBT symbols, showing up during Pride month, getting involved in the conversation, raising awareness, combatting LGBT discrimination, advocating for LGBT rights, and working with the community.

From the interpretivism paradigm, and through a qualitative lens, we explore the process of being willing to join the LGBT conversation, access allyship and activism, and celebrate Pride month with marketing campaigns. We conducted 58 interviews and analysed 20 brands.

Applying rainbows over logos, launching Pride collections, and developing rainbow-theme campaigns are becoming highly popular, which can be thoughtful within a deeper LGBT brand-building communication strategy or a way to sell products.

We aim to comprehend the new brand-consumer relationships in the brand's access to allyship and activism bandwagons within the LGBT context, overcoming promises, rhetoric and symbolism, and where purpose-driven agendas are not Swiss army knives.

We contributed to understanding the construct of brand activism and developing a strategic plan with an operational mindset for brands committed to activism.

Our findings emphasise the relevance of expectations, long-term commitments, engagement, context-sensitiveness, authenticity, and legitimacy in brand dialoguing with LGBT communities through an actionable plan with symbolic sensitiveness.

Pride month is one possible avenue, not the beginning of the private sector journey.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ERGs   *Allyship, Employee Resource Groups*

CPA   *Corporate Political Advocacy*

CRM   *Cause-Related Marketing*

CSR   *Corporate Social Responsibility*

DEI   *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion manager*

IDAHOBIT *International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia &*

     Transphobia

IDAHOT *International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia*

IGLTA   *International LGBTQ+ Travel Association*

ILGA   *International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association*

LGBT   *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender*

LGBTQ+ *- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or sometimes questioning),*

     and others

NGO   *Non-Governmental Organization*

PAR   *Participatory Action Research*

REDI   *Red Empresarial por la Diversidad e Integración*

SRM   *Socially Responsible Marketing*

TIU   *Theories-In-Use*

UN   *United Nations*

UK   *United Kingdom*

US   *United States*

USA   *United States of America*

CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

The purpose of Chapter 1 is to provide an expeditious background of the thesis and justify the relevance and topicality of the research theme. The chapter features a quick explanation of the research keywords and elucidates the outline of the structure followed in the thesis.

1.1.   The knowledge gaps and relevance

As more brands promote activist marketing messaging and prosocial corporate practices, research examining brand activism is sparse (Schmidt et al. 2022). There is a lack of answers to the how, why, and when brands use this strategy (Vredenburg et al. 2020). Hence, we investigate how brands move from allyship to activism within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) conversation.

The risks of commercializing Pride throughout a marketing strategy are higher than ever, increasing the need to study the nexus between LGBT movements, private sector, brands, and activism. It is urgent to clarify the role of purpose-driven brands in contemporary marketing strategies. Following Porter's recommendation to understand social activism within business programs (Porter, as interviewed by Driver, 2012), this research has five expected contributions:

(1) To be part of the construct hunting regarding brand activism;

(2) Explore the process that brands go through to move from allyship to activism within the LGBT context;

(3) Distinguishing the communication strategy from the activism strategy;

(4) Exploring brand legitimacy (or lack of it) to join the LGBT conversation;

(5) Define the steps to develop a brand activist strategy with transparency and authenticity directives.

We propose a comprehensive framework applicable to the LGBT issues supported by the idea that activism campaigns around it establish shared meaning with audiences (Ciszek, 2017) able to print changes and improvements within the society.

With an active role in promoting social changes, brand activism is now more commercial (Hughes, 2006; Olson, 2017). This is a new area of research that relies on strategic communication to impart social change (Ciszek, 2017).

Figure 1 shows the five expectations of the present research project, represented by the overlapping of three areas: (1) LGBT conversation or context, (2) strategic communication and marketing campaigns, and (3) allyship and activism market positionings and statuses.

Figure 1. Main areas of research
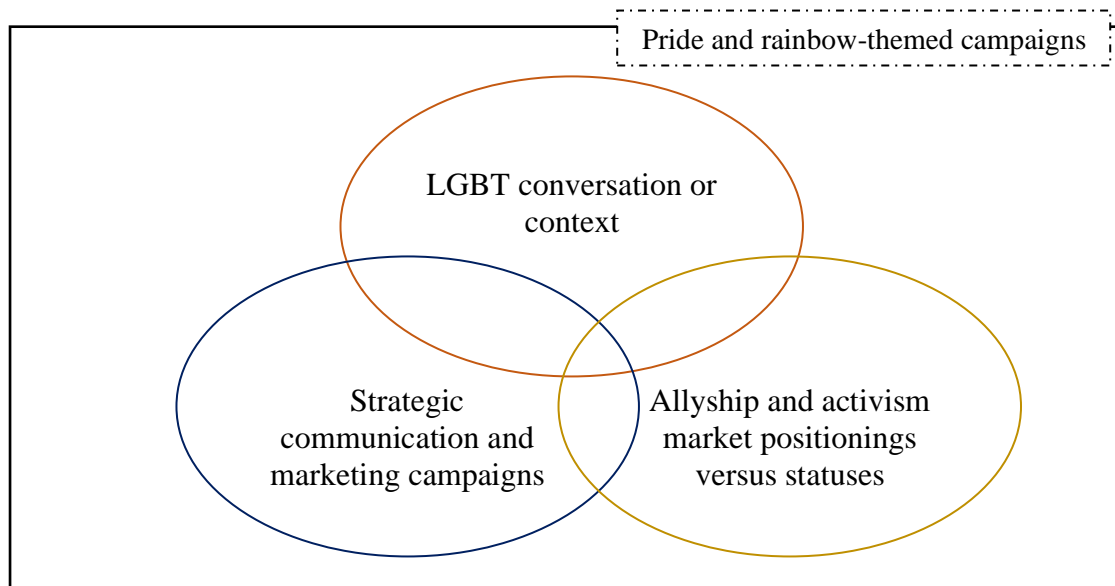
1.2. The new relationship between the private sector and the consumer

If activism is considered "a form of strategic communication that operates to produce meaning and create discourses for social change" (Ciszek, 2017 p. 10), can brand activists be considered strategic social agents (Schoenberger-Orgad, 2011)?

For Richard Edelman, chief executive officer of Edelman, there is a new relationship between a company and a consumer. The functional benefits are no longer enough (Salzer-Mörling & Strannegård, 2007; Schmidt et al. 2022). The purchase decision also results from the brand's willingness to act with purpose and, when necessary, leap activism. This idea aligns with Porter and Kramer's (2011) call on businesses to help solve societal

problems, supported by the belief that marketing and the private sector have the power to act as problem solvers.

Consumption seeks brands with personality attributes typically attributed to humans (Asenjo Mccabe & Del Pino-Romero, 2023). A 2018 empirical study found that 64% of global consumers boycott or buy based on their stand on societal issues (Edelman, 2018). One year later, empirical studies concluded that consumers argue that too many brands use social issues as a marketing move to sell more (Edelman, 2019). Three years later, in 2022, a report launched by the Edelman Trust Institute in partnership with GLAAD concluded that if a brand publicly supports LGBT rights and acceptance, Americans are 2x more likely to buy or use the brand.

1.3. Brand allyship and activism within the LGBT conversation or context

Drawing from this commitment mirrored in the several reports, consumer's responses go from full support to boycotting and scepticism (Schmidt et al. 2022; Xu & Zhoub, 2020). This scepticism might be related to the performative use of queer imagery and the commercial support of the LGBT movement. This more mainstream acceptance may result in rainbow washing, which refers to the use of LGBT rainbow for companies and brands to signal their support through advertising without engaging in further support of this community (Champlin & Li, 2020; Clements, 2017).

In June, many brands talk about LGBT rights. Pride month is a moment to celebrate the progress made in raising awareness of issues and furthering rights, becoming popular as an opportunity to advocate for respect and equality worldwide, to celebrate the progress made, and to follow the herd. Producing rainbow goods without talking about LGBT struggles and experiences is questionable, and we explore these tensions between brand activism stories, actions, expectations, and outcomes.

Consumers' polarised reactions to activist messaging are evidenced by comments collected throughout 2022 (from Instagram accounts) towards 2021 Pride campaigns launched by brands like Crate and Barrel, Patagonia, or Lego: *"You guys should stick to furniture…"*; *"I don't know why this LGBT thing is so fashionable now, it reminds me of racism, (…)"*; *"A true ally!"*; *"Love this company, their business model and all they stand for!"*.

How should brands reply to these social media comments in the context of brand activism?

According to Batista et al. (2022), five studies investigating different causes, including LGBT+ phobia, concluded that consumers evaluate brands that reply using an assertive attitude more favourably than those using an aggressive attitude. Thus, if the literature warns that consumers demand transparency and authenticity (Nielsen, 2016), it also argues that there is a lack of knowledge about why corporations are taking stands on controversial issues (Maks-Soloman & Drewry, 2020). Going to the consumer behaviour field without exploring the brand activism construct could provide weak in-field conclusions and superficial contributions. Most studies on activism are consumer-oriented (Koch, 2020; Veresiu & Giesler, 2018). Ultimately, everyone plays the role of consumer and belongs to different audiences targeted by the brands, including activists, managers, marketers, and leaders. In other words, we may consider that their perspectives give a slight vision of the consumer perspective regarding brand activism within the LGBT context.

The new brand-consumer bond emphasises capitalism acting with a purpose, becoming a commodity. According to Nielsen (2016), the brand commitment to social issues is a distinctive factor when making purchase decisions. Citizens across the globe demand that brands positively contribute to social outcomes rather than turning sales, as endorsed by several studies (Champlin & Li, 2020; Li, 2022). Consumers demand social responsibility (Nielsen, 2016), transparency and authenticity from brands.

What are the social responsibilities of brands concerning the LGBT challenges?
As the private sector gets involved within the broader sphere of social activism, marketing moves from its transactional core to a more relational tone, supported by relations and focused on building, maintaining, and strengthening emotional bonds with its consumers and audiences (Asenjo Mccabe & Del Pino-Romero, 2023).

Brand activism is a natural evolution of corporate social responsibility research and socially responsible marketing (SRM). It arises as a possible avenue for communication as a driver of social change (Kotler & Sarkar, 2017). Following Laczniak and Shultz's (2021) definition, SRM "consists of practices and perspectives mandated by an implicit social contract, which requires marketing policies, actions, and outcomes to adhere to a corporate citizenship that is proactive and non-discretionary". The authors claim it pursues social and environmental sustainability, which may potentially create LGBT-friendly brands.

1.4. Is Pride for sale?

The rainbow, a global symbol of the LGBT community, has been adopted by brands for marketing and commercial purposes (Champlin & Li, 2020), reflecting the 'rainbowfication' of brands. As brands actively campaign for LGBT rights, we must understand if this support during a specific time of the year configurates brand activism. It is important to discuss if it can be both. Is Pride for sale?

Following Miranda et al. (2020), we adopt an exploratory approach via an analytical and abductive research strategy based on content analysis, supported by different qualitative tools and theories-in-use research. Throughout this process, we aim to explore the dimensions of allyship and activism within the LGBT conversation provided by data collection and analysis and its articulation with prior literature. Additionally, it will be vital to explore the role of communication in the ally and activist brand market positioning.

We analyse content posted by 20 brands from different industries on their Instagram official accounts, identifying the launch of Pride campaigns targeting the LGBT conversation and movement (a social movement that advocates equal rights for LGBT persons and calls for an end to discrimination against this community), and the dissemination of activist messages related to message's LGBT topics commitment. From the Instagram publication, we proceed to the website of each brand. The sample is made up of 20 brands and 58 in-depth interviews, using triangulation in the form of getting robust results. We propose a brand activism framework and identify different ways brands can get involved in LGBT issues as allies and activists [eventually, as polemicists].

1.5. Thesis outline

The composition of this research includes the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1**: Introduction
  Provide a background of the thesis and explain the theme's relevance. It also features an explanation of the research keywords.

- **Chapter 2**: Research Problem
  This Chapter results from the knowledge gap identified in Chapter One. It defines the foundations for the research development.

- **Chapter 3**: Literature Review, Conceptual Model and Propositions

  Contextualise the area of research, including perspectives, studies, findings and implications regarding activist brands.

- **Chapter 4**: Methodology and Research Process

  Includes the methodology strategy, referring to the research context, selection of initiatives to investigate our propositions, data collection, generation, and analysis, and quality criteria.

- **Chapter 5**: Results

  It shows the results of the data collection and analysis. The analysis has three distinct but complementary phases regarding the results from secondary data, primary data and document analysis.

- **Chapter 6**: Discussion

  Explores the research propositions and conceptualises the results. The discussion phase is supported by the contextualisation of research findings, exploring the five propositions and the conceptual framework.

- **Chapter 7**: Concluding Remarks and Contributions

  This Chapter features the concluding remarks and the theoretical and managerial implications and contributions. The final part refers to the study's limitations and future avenues for research.

- **Chapter 8**: Ethical Issues

  Explains the guidelines regarding informed consent, access, and participant protection.

- **More info**: References and Appendices

  Includes all the literature and resources analysed for the research and provides detailed information regarding the primary and secondary data collected in the research context.

CHAPTER 2

2. Research Problem

This chapter is the result of the knowledge gap identified in Chapter One. It defines the foundations for the research development. The paramount purpose is to expand knowledge about the brand's engagement with the LGBT movement and to look for practical problems and opportunities to join the conversation, especially during Pride month.

2.1.   Main research question and specific research questions

Joining the LGBT conversation is just one of the many possible outcomes of developing marketing strategies focused on activist messaging and actions, providing personal and social value, sharing brand stories (Castelló-Martínez, 2023), connecting life experiences, representing something real, and becoming purpose-driven. Showing up during a social issue, standing up for it, assuming an allyship market positioning, becoming an activist, accessing the ally or activist statuses and the market of legitimisation create opportunities for brands to be relevant or lead to consumer boycotts and backlashes to social irresponsible companies (Cammarota & Marino, 2021).

Moving from allyship to activism needs more investigations, as the knowledge field has received little attention (Li, 2022; Oakenfull, 2013) and refers to a young theoretical concept. Brands are no longer just targets of the LGBT conversation but sources and voices of that conversation and, consequently, of LGBT activism (Ball, 2019; Zhou, 2021). We explore intangible (messaging) and tangible (practice) brand commitments and efforts regarding LGBT issues (Vredenburg et al. 2020) as we develop an interpretive framework for this branch of strategic communication.

We find the theories-in-use (TIU) approach perfectly tailored for addressing deep and broad research questions for which we do not have good answers. There is a lack of knowledge regarding brands' strategic decisions to become allies and activists and their access to both statuses through the legitimisation process led by different stakeholders, including activists and associations (the priority stakeholders, also perceived as the informal regulators of the legitimacy market or legitimacy gatekeepers in the current

study), and the broader community. This lack of knowledge includes the factors behind the success or failure of this recent field in strategic communication (Miguel & Miranda, 2023) and the conceptualization of ally brands and activist brands. Given the overall purpose of the study and its exploratory outline, the main research question is the following:

How is the process of moving from allyship to brand activism market positioning within the LGBT context?

We intend to contribute to a better understanding of brands getting public stands on controversial issues. That said, the specific research questions are the following:

1. What are the different phases of moving from allyship to brand activism?

2. How can brands assess their legitimacy and legitimisation to join the LGBT conversation?

3. How are brands advocating and celebrating LGBT rights, acceptance, and visibility during Pride month?

4. What is the relationship between using LGBT symbols for marketing purposes, Pride campaigns, and positive outcomes for the LGBT community?

5. How are rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-theme campaigns (queer imagery) a form of strategic communication to impart social change?

6. What are the key elements to develop a brand activist strategy with transparency within the LGBT context?

These six research questions arise from three codependent dynamics:

1. Growth of brands promoting activist marketing messaging and prosocial corporate practices (Ball, 2019; Zhou, 2021).

2. Pride is conquering growing interest in the private sector (Hydock et al. 2020).

3. Marketing research examining brand activism and activist brands is sparse (Schmidt et al. 2022).

Therefore, we know very little about brands promoting activist messaging, the role of strategic communication in the new relationship between brands and consumers, and the commercialization of Pride throughout marketing campaigns. Finally, there is a lack of answers about the role of purpose-driven agendas in contemporary marketing strategies and the influence of LGBT voices in the brand's access to ally and activist statuses.

2.2. Research objectives and expected contributions

Little academic interest has engaged brand activism with communication for social change. To reduce this gap, we respond to Waisbord's call for "theoretically sophisticated and empirically rich studies" (2014, p. 165) that clarify the relationship between brand participation and social change. Our conceptual model and the research methodology model will address this research problem.

Considering the primary purpose and question of the research, the specific objectives are:

1. Examining the process of moving from allyship to activism within the LGBT context and through Pride campaigns;

2. Identifying the criteria to decide to get involved in the LGBT conversation;

3. Exploring how brands support the community through rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns during Pride month;

4. To develop the framework to support brands in getting involved.

Despite the growing importance of the new relationship between brands and consumers (Edelman, 2019), where the functional benefits are no longer enough (Salzer-Mörling & Strannegård, 2007; Schmidt et al. 2022) and businesses must help solve social problems through the power of acting as problem solvers, the discussion is yet about conceptualising brand activism and understand when it became a thing (Kotler & Sarkar, 2017).

From the need to explore brands' connections with LGBT acceptance (Vredenburg et al. 2020) to the risks of commercialising Pride, academics and practitioners know little about how brands explore the strengths and weaknesses of the LGBT community. Research of brand activism applied to the LGBT issue still faces challenges:

1. Despite the increasing number of brands that have begun to tap into the LGBT dream market (Rigdon, 1991; Tuten, 2006), the academic topic has received little attention (Li, 2022; Oakenfull, 2013), including the factors behind the success or failure of this recent field in strategic communication (Miguel & Miranda, 2023).

2. The criteria that define a brand as LGBT-friendly are yet to be established (Ciszek, 2017; Oakenfull, 2013; Sibai et al. 2021; Tuten, 2006; Vredenburg et al. 2020);

3. Most studies on corporate social responsibility (CSR) advertising have examined less controversial social issues (Sheehan & Berg 2018);

4. Terms such as brand activism (Kotler & Sarkar, 2017), corporate social advocacy (Dodd, 2018) and corporate social justice (Zhang, 2020) need to be more explored;

5. The scepticism concerning brand activism within the LGBT context has been left unanswered (Vredenburg et al. 2020).

Porter recommends that social activism must be understood within business programs (Porter, as interviewed in Driver, 2012), influencing our five expected contributions:

1. To be part of the construct hunting regarding brand activism;

2. Explore the process of moving from allyship to activism as brands within the LGBT context;

3. Distinguishing the communication strategy from the activism strategy;

4. Define the development framework of a brand activist strategy with transparency and authenticity concerns;

5. Exploring the legitimacy of brands to get involved in LGBT issues.

Empirical evidence through primary and secondary data will support the conceptual model, allowing us to study the leap from allyship to activism within the LGBT context. To deepen the investigation, we examine how and why brands are slapping rainbows over their logos, launching Pride collections, and designing rainbow-theme campaigns, as doubts remain about how good [brand] allies and activists look. To address our research purpose and question, we defined six starting points:

(1) The topic under study is narrow and moves from identifying a research problem to transforming it into a specific research program;

(2) This is brand-oriented research and not consumer-oriented;

(3) We do not distinguish between B2B brand activism (Kapitan et al. 2022) and B2C;

(4) Explore the concepts of authenticity, legitimacy and legitimisation, according to Campbell (2007), Kates (2004), Marion (2006), Nunes et al. (2021), Suchman (1995), and Welch et al. (2016);

(5) Reexamine prior literature, placing marketing context (Anteby & Anderson, 2014; Chan, 2017; Swaminathan et al. 2020; Zhou, 2021) as a key element;

(6) Develop a conceptual model and research propositions supported by two sources - literature review and data collection (primary and secondary data).

As we explore how brands embrace LGBT messaging and actions during Pride month and how they work to reach an ally and activist market positioning and conquer the ally and activist statuses, we aim to provide insights for researchers and practitioners. The relevance and topicality of our research problem come from the lack of knowledge regarding this thesis topic, considering that much strategic communication and social corporate responsibility research has been ignoring the marketing context (Anteby & Anderson, 2014; Chan, 2017; Swaminathan et al. 2020; Zhou, 2021).

The brand's decision to catch the allyship and activism bandwagons raised interest in an inquiry into the marketing academic field (Mirzaei et al. 2022; Shetty et al. 2019). We will conceptualise brand activism from social corporate responsibility and socially responsible marketing perspectives. Additionally, we explore the process of being willing to assume public stands regarding polarising issues to conquer the allyship and activism statuses and the inherent strategic decision of getting a vocal market positioning within the LGBT conversation. Therefore, it is vital to understand the concept of allyship applied to the LGBT context and the engagement of the private sector with the LGBT community to fight prejudice and support rights and acceptance.

CHAPTER 3

3. Literature Review, Conceptual Model and Propositions

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the area of research, including perspectives, studies, findings and implications regarding activist brands in general and within the particular context of LGBT issues. Hence, we explore the movement towards brand activism, the LGBT worldwide panorama and Pride influence in strategic communication and socially responsible marketing by brands aiming to become social change agents.

3.1.   The movement toward brand activism

In 2017, Kotler and Sarkar asked: "When did brand activism become a thing?".

The stimulation for brands to stand up is undeniable in marketing (Curry, 2020). Brands connected to controversial issues are not new. From Pepsi-Cola's adoption of the counterculture in the 1960s to Lucky Strike's campaign for the freedom of women to smoke (Manfredi-Sánchez, 2019), these are examples of brands co-opting causes for their benefit (Schmidt et al. 2022). However, this was particularly notable within the cause-related marketing (CRM). Also, Maks-Soloman and Drewry (2020) argue that brand activism remains unexplored while CSR is already intensely studied.

Brands have turned from targets of LGBT activism to sources of that activism (Ball, 2019; Zhou, 2021), with Pride conquering growing interest (Hydock et al. 2020). Yet researchers know little about how brands are constructing activist messages. One of the reasons for this lack of knowledge is that much research has been concerned with health and political-related domains, ignoring the marketing context (Anteby & Anderson, 2014; Chan, 2017; Swaminathan et al. 2020; Zhou, 2021).

The adherence of brands to the activism bandwagon raised the interest in inquiry into the area of marketing (Mirzaei et al. 2022; Shetty et al. 2019) and strategic communication. One year before Kotler and Sarkar's (2017) recognition of brand activism strength, the Marketing Science Institute classified the issue of whether brands should take such stands as one of the critical issues emerging in the not-too-distant marketing future (2016). With almost two-thirds of consumers expecting brands to work to improve the state of society, brand activism can also be profitable (Accenture, 2018). According to its global research,

62% of customers expect brands to take a stand on social issues. Companies are more profitable than ever when they get woke (Klee, 2023). Thus, it is vital to understand if placing brands as moral actors that promote legal, economic, social, political, or environmental reform can help or damage the brand and how to design activist messages. Wannow, Haupt and Ohlwein's (2023) empirical study claims that activist efforts must promote the emergence of positive moral emotions.

Brands co-opting causes for their benefit (Schmidt et al. 2022) is not new. But brand activism as a concept is. In other words, the strategic exercise to establish a brand's image as an ally or activist in the consumer's mind is new. This new approach to market positioning, as the studies below support, depends on the brand's willingness to take stands on polarising social issues and the belief that acting by acting as moral actors, brands will create a competitive market position, which is crucial for long-term success (Chen & Uysal, 2002). The efforts to adhere to these new market positionings strive to enhance their authenticity, avoid traps, generate positive outcomes, and deliver value to the target communities, fulfilling the consumer's expectations. In other words, how a brand positions itself can make the difference between success and failure (It's the journey that matters, 2023). Moreover, market positioning is a way for a brand to set itself apart from the rest, and getting woke may mean more profits (Klee, 2023) and consumer expectations fulfilment (Accenture, 2018), arising as an ally or activist for the LGBT rights and acceptance, and fighting against prejudice, is a way to captivates consumers.

Studies like the one from Accenture (2018), Cone Communications (2017), and Edelman (2010) suggest that consumers and their consumption demands are crucial to these waking brands. However, there is a missing understanding of how brands can promote change and contribute to shifting consumer habits while getting positive impacts on their strategy, personality, and blueprint. The LGBT issues are at the heart of this new era of public movements, where marketing and brand activism have the potential to help solve contemporary challenges and pressures. Brands have turned from targets of LGBT activism to sources of that activism (Ball, 2019; Zhou, 2021). They are now rising as allies and advocates, with Pride Month conquering growing interest among marketing campaigns (Hydock et al. 2020). At the same time, firms are getting more involved in socio-political issues via CSR and related phenomena (Weber et al. 2023). Kotler and Sarkar (2017) believe that LGBT issues and the LGBT cause belong to this social brand activism sphere.

This increasing engagement must be aligned with the already established position, demanding a deeper look to the inside of the company, into the market and the demands of the consumers. Then, it is time to communicate it to the market. The challenge is what and how to share it, especially when the market positioning of brand allies or activists still requires more research and understanding.

3.2. Allyship and brand activism: The path

We identify the fragmented perspectives on brand activism definition (Table 1).

Table 1. Brand activism definitions

Author(s)	Definition	Brand activist elements
Eilert and Nappier Cherup (2020)	Willingness to take a stand on social, political, economic, and environmental issues to create societal change by influencing the attitudes and behaviours of actors.	Three types of influences: normative, mimetic, and coercive.
Moorman (2020)	Public speech or actions on partisan issues made by or on behalf of a company. Defined by partisan nature.	Commitments: education, cultural authority, authenticity, corporate citizen, calculative, political mission, employee engagement.
Mukherjee and Althuizen (2020)	Taking a stand on controversial social or political issues.	---
Vredenburg *et al.* (2020)	Positioning to create social change. Intangible and tangible actions. Beyond advocacy or messaging. Aligned to "corporate practices that uphold brand purpose and values (p.448).	Purpose and values-driven; focus on polarizing issues, contributing to them by brand practice and messaging. Four typologies of brand activism: absence; silent; inauthentic; and authentic.
Manfredi-Sánchez, (2019)	"Communication strategy whose aim is to influence the citizen-consumer by means of messages and campaigns created and sustained by political values" (p.348).	Symbolic value; brands influence the status of the citizen-consumer; controversial positions; aesthetics of authenticity; language of local/global.

Kotler and Sarkar (2017)	"Values-driven agenda for companies that care about the future of society" (para.11). Six areas: social, business, political, legal, economic, and environmental.	Client's care? Will they believe that the brand is authentic? Will it raise prices? Do Leaders see why it makes a difference?
Vilá and Bharadwaj (2017)	"Committed to progress on environmental and social goals" (para.6). Does the strategy reinforce brand attributes or create new ones? Would the strategy be difficult to imitate?	Three domains to explore: brand heritage, customer satisfaction, and product externalities. Select the social to be focused on.

Secondly, we need to set brand activism apart from CSR, CRM, woke brand activism and corporate socio-political activism. Wettstein and Baur (2016) distinguish brand activism and CSR in two ways: (1) CSR activities are more consensual and viewed as positive by most of society, and (2) CSR more strongly emphasises actions than it does corporation values. The study of Vredenburg et al. (2020) argues that authentic brand activism draws from CSR literature, emphasising the relevance of activist marketing messages strategic alignment with brand purpose, values, and prosocial corporate actions to the perceptions of authenticity. Connecting this with the definition of authenticity according to Nunes et al. (2021), we have all the component judgments that determine how consumers perceive the actions of brands, except originality, excluded from how Vredenburg et al. (2020) understand authentic brand activism. Although Carroll's pyramid (Carroll, 1979; Carroll, 1999; Carroll, 2016; Tamvada, 2020) influences CSR scholarship, the conceptualisations create unclear scopes about brand activism. Sachs et al. (2009) definition of CSR is rooted in morality. It gives businesses the responsibility to contribute to the welfare of society and stakeholders while pursuing their economic goals. Brand activism mission is to increase awareness and encourage behavioural and socio-political change, generating passionate responses: "Since you made pride cookies, I expect to see cookies celebrating straight pride" or "I'm a member of the LGBTQ community and I thank you for your creation of the Rainbow flag heart-shaped cookie"[1]. Vredenburg et al. (2020) claim that this requires a high internal practice and a high degree of message practice. This claim emphasises the

relevance of ensuring the market positioning accurately represents the company. Therefore, having a purpose-driven agenda, following pro-social values, taking stands about controversial matters, and joining the LGBT conversation create a brand identity that will appeal to consumers to begin their positioning process with the vision and values of the brand (It's the journey that matters, 2023). Micheletti et al. (2006) see the notion of political consumption as vital to explore the difference between both tactics, in harmony with corporate social advocacy activities. Political consumption refers to taking a stand on issues with political relevance (Hydock et al. 2020). Manfredi-Sánchez (2019) explains that consumers' purchase decisions may be influenced by beliefs, supporting the idea that brands influence citizen-consumers decisions. This is related to socio-political activism, referring to the corporation's "public demonstration of support for or opposition to one side of a partisan socio-political issue" (Bhagwat et al. 2020, p.1). This public engagement in political activism originates from marketing campaigns and content that support social movements, such as the LGBT movement, or uphold political values. The goal is to build a purposeful brand by connecting its discourse with contextual realities with an open and lasting commitment (De Miguel-Zamora et al. 2022). These insights enable the brand to engage empathetically with the consumer (Castelló-Martínez, 2019) as they involve thoughts, feelings, or actions that the consumer can relate to (Sebastián-Morillas et al. 2020, p. 346). New communication practices are growing at the intersection of the corporate world, activism, and politics (Manfredi-Sánchez, 2019). Political consumption is criticised by Lekakis (2013), according to whom this idea of consumption with a political nature is a "neoliberal fallacy that benefits the producers of goods at the expense of consumers" (p.5). By enjoying the LGBT conversation, brands may be undermining the movement. Intending to influence the citizen-consumer through messages and actions, we are at the forefront of brand activism. Varadarajan and Menon (1988, p.60) proposed the following definition for CRM: "[…] the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterised by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue-providing exchanges that satisfy organisational and individual objectives". In 2008, Larson et al. defined CRM as the "marketing activities in which company donations to a cause are based upon sales of specified goods or services" (p.272). Brønn and Vrioni (2001) claim that CRM is more a rational decision than an altruistic one. Galan-Ladero (2013) identify

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[1] Instagram comments in Pride posts in Confections account: https://www.instagram.com/sugarcookieart/

several types of CRM programs, including type of donation, number of products, corporations and associations involved, duration, geographical scope, cause supported, the media used, and who pays the donation. Following Mirzaei et al. (2022), woke activism occurs when brands support a controversial issue. This public stance relates to corporate socio-political activism (Bhagwat et al. 2020) and explores unresolved matters on which institutional and societal opinion is split (Nalick et al. 2016). Comparing it to CSR and corporate socio-political activism (Bhagwat et al. 2020), a considerable difference is the extent to which the social issue is widely favoured rather than partisan. CSR involves societal consensus, and corporate socio-political activism is polarising and depends on the stakeholders' values (Bhattacharya & Elsbach, 2002). Corporate political advocacy (CPA) is when corporations get involved in political activities with direct financial payoffs (Hillman et al. 2004). While the CSA action promotion is public and vocal (Nalick et al. 2016), firms execute CPA quietly (Bhagwat et al. 2020). Thus, brand activism is related to CSR, CRM, SRM, woke brand activism and corporate socio-political activism but is a distinct construct demanding more elucidation. This idea of brands purpose-driven relies on the inspiration thinking of marketing, provided by Levitt's work (1983). It reinforces the notions of brand communication and activism as strategic and societal tools that communicate and create value for customers and can be profitable (Martin & Burpee, 2022). Offering the best product becomes insufficient among purposeful brands. Offering the best story is not enough. De Miguel-Zamora et al. (2022) define the brand story as the content that achieves a stronger emotional connection with the targeted audience by basing the message on a narrative logic created by the brand to associate it with specific values. Contributing to a better world is the new test.

Thirdly, brand activism includes the risks of generating polarised responses and alienating customers. Brands should get involved with social-political issues when there is a strategic alignment between messaging and practice to authentically connect with people (Mirzaei et al. 2022; Moorman, 2020; Vredenburg et al. 2020). In other words, brands must stay true to a position (Becker et al. 2019). Engaging with causes in inauthentic ways generates backlash and corporate hypocrisy (Wagner et al. 2009), which is "the belief that a firm claim to be something that it is not" (p.79). To avoid them, Manfredi-Sánchez (2019) explains that brand activism borrows the aesthetics of authenticity from the campaigns of social movements, showing five elements: symbolic value, defence of controversial issues,

engagement with a global audience through alliances with third parties, draws from digital activism and masters the language of the local and global. Social movements and digital activism proximity is a relatively new phenomenon, going from clicktivism to political consumerism, digital petitions, data activism, and hacktivism, among other forms (George & Leidner, 2019). Additionally, digital activism is digitally mediated social activism (Selander & Jarvenpaa, 2016) to promote social movements. Brand activism usually means adopting non-neutral positionings on social issues and movements with the potential to be disruptive or to create tensions (Kapital et al. 2022), being flexible enough to be digitally mediated or enter the traditional activism.

Activist positionings creates the expectation that brands will fight against prejudice (Mirzaei et al. 2022), and authenticity may influence its success. However, the truthfulness of this claim has not been empirically verified (Becker et al. 2019). Researchers don't have an ordinary definition of authenticity, which reveals the complexity of the concept and the tendency to create rationales for contexts (Nunes et al. 2021). This ambiguity includes subtypes of authenticity, such as brand authenticity (Cinelli & LeBoeuf, 2019) and emotional authenticity (Audrezeta et al. 2020). Nunes et al. (2021), see authenticity as "a holistic consumer assessment determined by six component judgments whereby the role of each component can change according to the consumption context" (p.2):

1. As a formative construct instead of reflective, authenticity is a combination of the six complimentary judgments.

2. As a composite formative construct rather than causal, authenticity does not live alone but by its components. We target the legitimacy indicator in the brand activism context, which can lead to the redefinition of constructs (Welch et al. 2016), but we must clarify the six (Table 2).

Table 2. The six components of Authenticity

Component(s)	Definition
Accuracy	Reliability of a provider. The extent to which a brand is perceived as transparent about itself, products, or services.
Connectedness	Extent to a source and its offering makes a customer feel engaged, familiar with, and transformed.

Integrity	Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivations. The extent to which a brand is intrinsically motivated, acting consistently over time.
Originality	The extent to which a service or product stands out from mainstream offerings present in the market.
Proficiency	The extent to which a brand is perceived as suitably skilled, showing expertise and/ or craftsmanship.
Legitimacy	The social fit of a brand. The extent to which a product or service adheres to shared rules, standards, norms, or traditions of the market.

Note: adapted from the framework developed by Nunes et al. (2021).

Consumers condemn inauthentic activist brands, accusing them of woke washing (Moorman, 2020; Vredenburg *et al*. 2020) or pinkwashing (Clements, 2017).

As brands move from placing advertisements in LGBT media to assume sides, consumers become sceptical regarding rainbow logos everywhere or launching Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns (Li, 2022). This attention increases during Pride. On one hand, this Pride appropriation is a sign of mainstream acceptance. On the other hand, it is a deception of the movement's heritage.

Schallehn et al. (2014) see authenticity as continuity and consistency with a corporation's purposes and values. This perception implies credibility, continuity, integrity, and symbolism.

Beverland and Farrelly (2010) argue that being authentic is the desire for the real and genuine. Miguel and Miranda (2023) insist that consistency is crucial to achieving effectiveness, referring to the connection between identity, values and purposes, and the defended cause. The authors also state that it is crucial to be sincere about how brands address the issue and contribute to the cause, which might imply partnerships and internal policies to promote the public position.

Vredenburg *et al*. (2020) see authentic and inauthentic as two of the four types of brand activism. Both dimensions have core elements (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Core elements of (in)authentic brand engagement (from Vredenburg et al. 2020).

Brand Engagement

Authentic		Inauthentic	
For social change: purpose, values, messaging, and corporate practice.	Match of purpose and values with messaging and corporate practice.	Disconnection of communication with purpose, values and practice.	Sell more is the main motivation. Instrumental use of allyship activism.
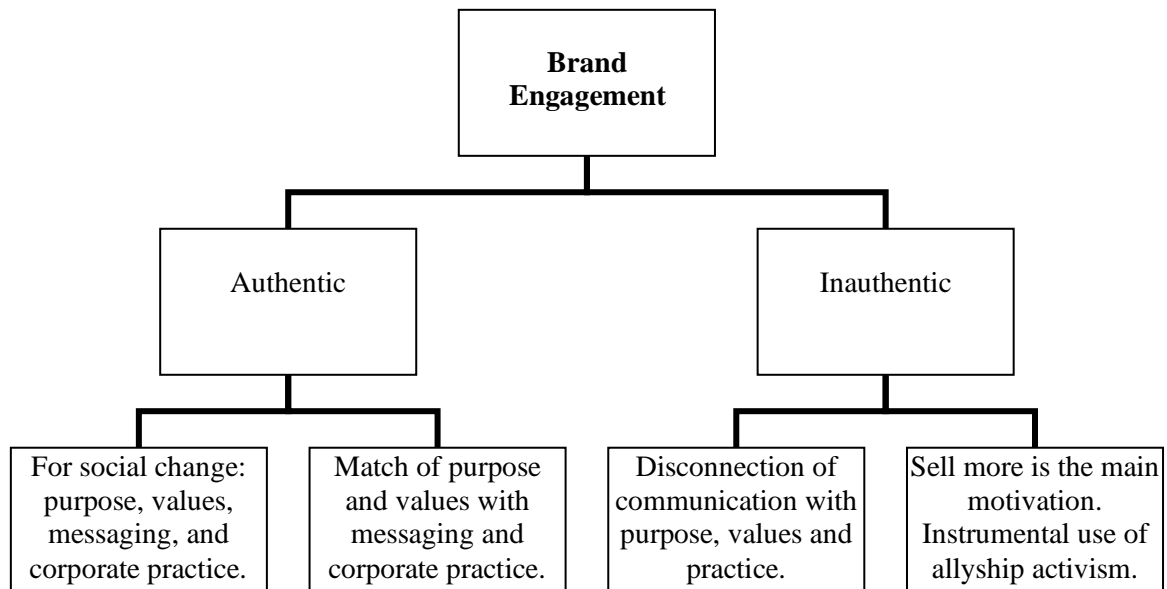
The other two are absence and silent brand activism. Absent activist brands don't use activist marketing messaging, don't have prosocial brand purpose and values, and have yet to adopt prosocial corporate practices in their market positioning. Silent activist brands embrace socio-political causes but operate behind the scenes, working on prosocial corporate practices that become part of their identity, values and purpose. As the demand for brand activism grows, consumers tolerate baby steps if they are transparent (Vredenburg et al. 2020) but not misleading actions (Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990).

Authenticity influences how citizens use new forms of engagement and participation, with emphasis on political consumption, referring to the "consumer's decision either to punish (i.e., boycott) or reward (i.e., buycott) companies by making selective choices of products or brands, based on social, political, or ethical considerations" (Baek, 2010, p.1066). Schmidt et al. (2022) argue that consumer support is conditional, as they expect brands to act what they preach. When brands do not deliver their promises, consumers have the channels to call them out (Bakhtiari, 2020), which happens within inauthentic brand activism (Campbell, 2007), referring to brands that embrace activist marketing messaging to communicate their support for socio-political issues (Vredenburg et al. 2020) but with a lack of explicit motivations, values, purpose, values, and corporate practices. Following Ahmed et al. (2022) research, Ikea and Bosch's successful campaigns show alignment between their support, what they stand up for and their policies. Transparency and accountability are critical to avoid the perceptions of false activist positionings. The promise has actions (Bakhtiari, 2020). Vredenburg et al. (2020) explain that authentic

activists' brands can be liberal and progressive when taking a stance on topical issues or conservative by taking a nonneutral position. Kotler and Sarkar (2017) argue that the activist strategy is progressive or regressive. Regressive brand activism occurs when brands promote changes or habits that hurt consumers. Progressive one occurs when brands seek to provoke a positive impact on societal problems, going beyond profits. To Eilert and Nappier Cherup (2020), brand activism explores how brands join socio-political issues. Brand activism occurs when brands take a side in the talk and contribute through messaging and practice. Brands stand up against homophobia and transphobia, advocate for human rights, contribute to eliminating discrimination, pursue change, and act in the public and political sphere, being genuine (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). Brands can be supporters without being activists. However, brands can't be activists without taking risks.

Otherwise, we won't be talking about brand activism but brand allyship. According to Spielmann, Dobscha, and Shrum (2023), true allyship is expressed through words and actions, while performative allyship is about expressing allyship through rhetoric only, claiming that brands have little to gain from acting as performative allies, and even less so toward the communities most affected by social injustice. These words and actions are not necessarily risk carriers or politicised.

Conceptualising allyship refers to people who use their resources and advantages to question social and structural inequalities experienced by communities outside their own (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019). This understanding allows brands to reach an alternative positioning to activism within LGBT issues, for example, where intent and impact (Collier-Spruel & Ryan, 2022) have different meanings, scopes, and reaches. Allyship implies the state of being an ally working to support marginalised identity groups, including LGBT people, and on behalf of individuals treated differently due to religion, disability status, and other identities (Griffin, 1997). Distinguishing allyship from activism within the scopes of market positioning and access is mandatory, as the term ally often implies an identity rather than an action (Carlson et al. 2019). In this research, we don't understand allyship and allies just as the intention of supporting or a passive attitude regarding polarising issues and marginalised identity groups. We address allyship and allies [brands] as the intent of reaching this positioning and the actions to do so. Its effectiveness depends on its impact on the LGBT community (Collier-Spruel & Ryan, 2022), as activism does. Furthermore, allyship implies the recognition of privileged groups compared to

marginalised groups (Collier-Spruel & Ryan, 2022), relevant to gaining legitimacy (Selvanathan et al. 2020) and the legitimisation process.

We think legitimacy and legitimisation within market positioning and access to statuses, respectively (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Data structure depicting [brand] allyship and activism.
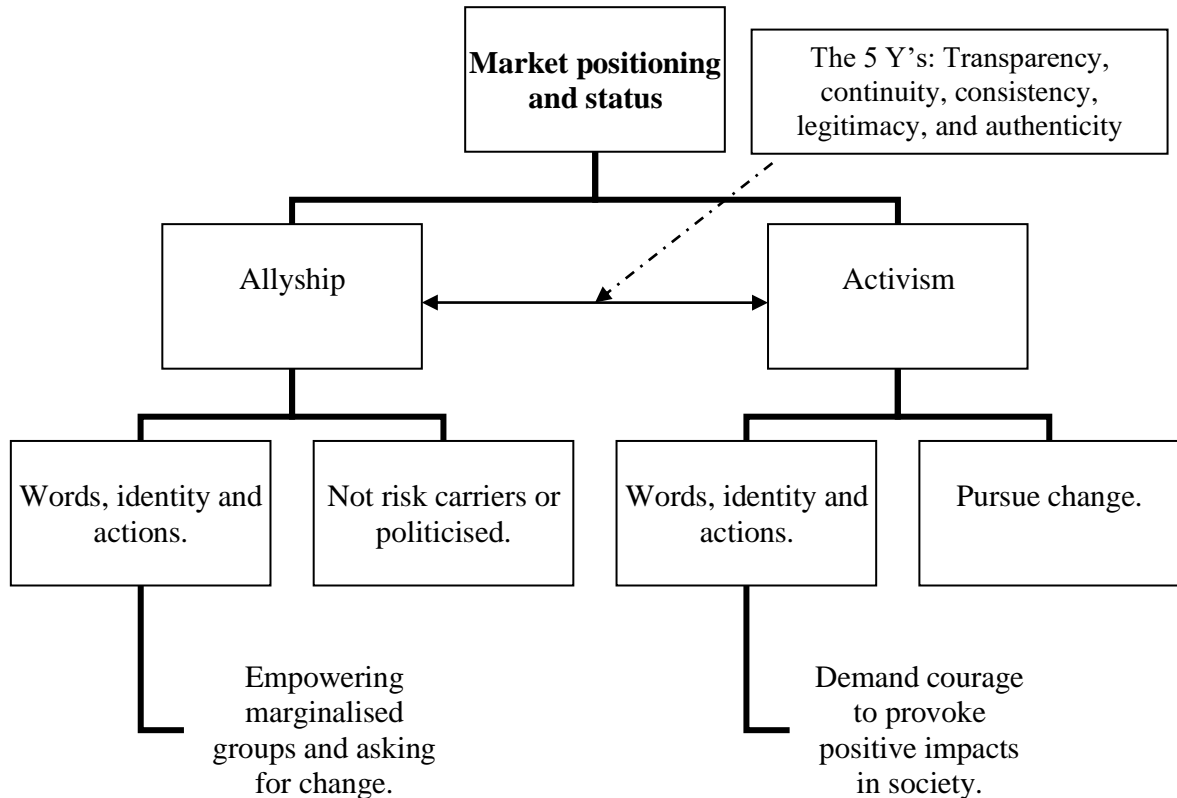
Scholars have been interested in studying allyship and ally status (Minei et al. 2023; Eichler, 2010; Lim et al. 2019). Following Collier-Spruel and Ryan's (2022) explanation about allyship and allies, LGBT allies are usually heterosexual individuals aware that equity and equality are yet to be realised, assuming a role in helping reach these goals (Washington & Evans, 1991). Moreover, the studies focused on the straight-person perspective (Ryan et al. 2013) and the workplace (Brooks & Edwards, 2009), with a lack of knowledge regarding brands accessing the ally status. Our research assumes a different perspective on ally status and allyship by examining the marketing process of the market positioning and status within the LGBT conversation and in a permanent connection to the activist market positioning and status. According to Sarah Kate Ellis (president of the NGO Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), in a statement to TIME magazine,

including the trans community in marketing is nothing new, but what is new is the extreme right-wing politicization of a company's creative and business decisions (Kohli, 2023). Brand communication within the LGBT context, as a form of strategic communication and advocacy, is the degree of awareness regarding this specific movement produced to the targeted audience achieved using messages and Pride imagery, creating expectations.

The pursuit of change is the heart of LGBT brand activism, and it must be genuine as a desired outcome. This honest motivation is vital to fulfilling the promise that brands will stand up for LGBT human rights, act in the public sphere and fight against discrimination and prejudice. Moulard et al. (2021, p. 99) understand authenticity as the degree to which a brand in one's environment is perceived to match up with something else or to be true. Breaking a promise or expectation may generate outrage (Bhargava & Bedi, 2022). Hence, market positioning, product range, and marketing define the purpose and objectives of brand allyship and activism marketing strategies (Ustik et al. 2023), where brands integrate allyship and activism into marketing to achieve short and long-term goals. This new approach to market positioning arises from the global trend of considering the principles of CSR together to make a profit, making companies redesign their business models. As a result, brands develop marketing strategies around polarising issues to increase competitiveness and maintain or build market positions (Ustik et al. 2023).

Brand allyship and activism explore how brands join socio-political issues and build their market position through them, being context and geographic-sensitive (Eilert & Nappier Cherup, 2020). Therefore, market positioning and brand access to allyship and activism differ. The first relates to strategically creating marketing strategies to create brand images in consumer's minds. The second is the regulator's validity of how brands engage with social issues and their communities.

3.3. The LGBT conversation worldwide

The 11th annual review of the human rights situation for LGBTI people in Europe and Central Asia (ILGA-Europe, 2022) reveals a severe rise in 2021 and 2022 of anti-LGBTI rhetoric from leaders, including politicians. Despite significant changes in the legal scenarios around the globe, public opinion and laws on the acceptance of LGBT communities remain sharply divided by region and country (United Nations Human Rights Office, 2017):

(a) More than a third of the world's countries criminalize loving same-sex relationships, putting millions of people at risk of blackmail, arrest and imprisonment;

(b) Several countries force transgender people to meet onerous preconditions before they can obtain legal recognition of their gender identity;

(c) The hostile public attitudes and the lack of legal protections create the perfect storm of violence and discrimination.

2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 are years of change. The European Union launched legal action over LGBTQ+ rights in Hungary and Poland (Rankin & Walker, 2021); France prohibited conversion therapy for the LGBT community (James, 2022); Canada bans conversion therapy (Lavietes, 2021); Singapore repealed a law (377A) that bans gay sex, making it legal to be homosexual in the city-state (Wong, 2022); and the Greek parliament approves legalisation of same-sex civil (Tugwell, 2024). Only other 13 countries have forms of national ban on conversion therapy, including Brazil (1999), Norway (2000), Samoa (2007), Argentina and Fiji (2010), Uruguay (2017), Albania (2017), Ecuador (2014), Malta (2016), and Germany (2019), according to Stonewall UK (2021).

Over 60 countries define any homosexual act as illegal (Carroll and Itaborahy, 2015), with castigation including imprisonment (ILGA, 2014). LGBT issues are an attractive social cause among the public (Cone Communications 2017). Chinery (2022) shows that 29% of the 122 companies that participated in June for Pride month with marketing campaigns registered a spike in first-time brand participation. But why June?

3.4.   Back to the Roots of Pride

June 1969 is a milestone in LGBT history, inaugurating a new approach to queer mobilisation (Iovannone, 2019). It is dangerous to see the Stonewall awakening as the higher point of the modern Gay Rights Movement. It marks one of the most significant events leading to the gay rights movement, as a group of LGBTQ+ people in New York City rioted following a police raid of the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village. One year later, demonstrations took place in New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles to mark the first anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. As the years came to pass, additional

cities in Europe and North America began to hold their own public demonstrations or pride days, leading to what we know today as a gay pride parade (IGLTA, 2022).

The first EuroPride happened in 1992 in London (EPOA, 2022). Lisbon will host the EuroPride event in 2025. With this increasing popularity, Pride moved from one day to a month, from June to the entire year. For Iovannone (2019), Pride is a call for freedom, with queer rights becoming more mainstream year after year. Yasmin Benoit, a British asexual activist, claims that Pride is about standing up for LGBTQIA+ rights, being an opportunity to celebrate progress and to show unity (Benoit, 2022). Pride is a protest, a homage, and a celebration without frontiers, but also the heart of the LGBT community's resilience. June gave and still gives tremendous visibility to the LGBT rights movement. However, June is not the exclusive month for Pride. From May to December, from Australia to Puerto Rico, festivals and parades took place in cities worldwide. Some also generate anti-Pride manifestations, as in 2022 in Belgrade (Stojanovic, 2022). Brands are now allies, sponsors (value-in-kind or cash sponsorship), and partners.

3.5.   Marketing, strategic communication, LGBT issues, and rainbow-washing

In 2021, brands like C&A, PUMA, Farfetch, Happy Socks, and Havaianas launched Pride campaigns. One year later, some of them did launch new campaigns, and some of them went silent. Are these brands devoted significant resources to the LGBT conversation? Changing logos into rainbow banners is allyship, activism, or exploitation? Brand activism is the (next) big thing, fostering new opportunities for the private sector to promote inclusion across the annual calendar: Trans Day of Visibility (31st March), Lesbian Visibility Day (26th April), International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia & Transphobia (IDAHOBIT / IDAHOT – 17th May), or Coming Out Day (11th October), according to the European Pride Organizers Association (2022). However, Pride Month continues to be the most popular among brands. And throughout the year, what happens?

The United Nations Human Rights Office (2017) developed five standards of conduct for business (UN LGBTI Standards), distributed in four dimensions (all times, workplace, marketplace, and community), claiming that companies "must become active agents of change", according to Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2017). The call is for companies all over the world to follow the above guidelines:

1. Respect human rights (at all times): Stand up for the human rights of LGBT people in the communities where they do business. Some themes include LGBT business cases and a code of conduct.

2. Eliminate discrimination (workplace): no discrimination in recruitment, employment, working conditions, benefits, respect for privacy, or treatment of harassment. HR policy and practice, international mobility and safety, or self-identification (on a country-by-country basis) are relevant actions to make this standard actionable.

3. Provide support (workplace): LGBT staff can work without stigma. Requires businesses to go beyond equal benefits and take steps to ensure inclusion. To make this standard actionable, include employee networks or resource groups, awareness and training initiatives, and leadership development.

4. Prevent other human rights violations (marketplace): Do not discriminate against LGBT suppliers, distributors, or customers. Ensure that partners do the same. Some actions for this standard include supply chain awareness and customer access.

5. Act in the public sphere (community): consult closely with local communities to identify what approaches to take in contexts where legal frameworks and existing practices violate the human rights of LGBT people. Gains traction through advocacy and quiet diplomacy with local embassies. Also, corporations work with civil society interfaces in the country.

To join the conversation, brands need to consider charity, internal support, dialogue about the multi-experience of Queerness, celebrating Pride all year, being purpose-driven, and encouraging change. And these are the criteria we will consider when analysing data for further discussion and conclusions.

As a result of the literature review, we give a window to reality and a refined conceptual model (Figure 4). We propose a comprehensive framework backed by the idea that activism campaigns establish shared meaning with audiences (Ciszek, 2017) able to print social changes. Hence, brand activism goes beyond messaging and must pay attention to the degree of consistency of message practice.

To produce new knowledge, we respond to Waisbord and Mellado's (2014) call for theoretically sophisticated and empirically rich studies to clarify the relationship between brand participation and social change. The 2022 report by Edelman Trust Institute with GLAAD reveals that 59% of Americans believe that businesses have the potential to generate positive outcomes for the LGBT community.

Figure 4. The conceptual model.
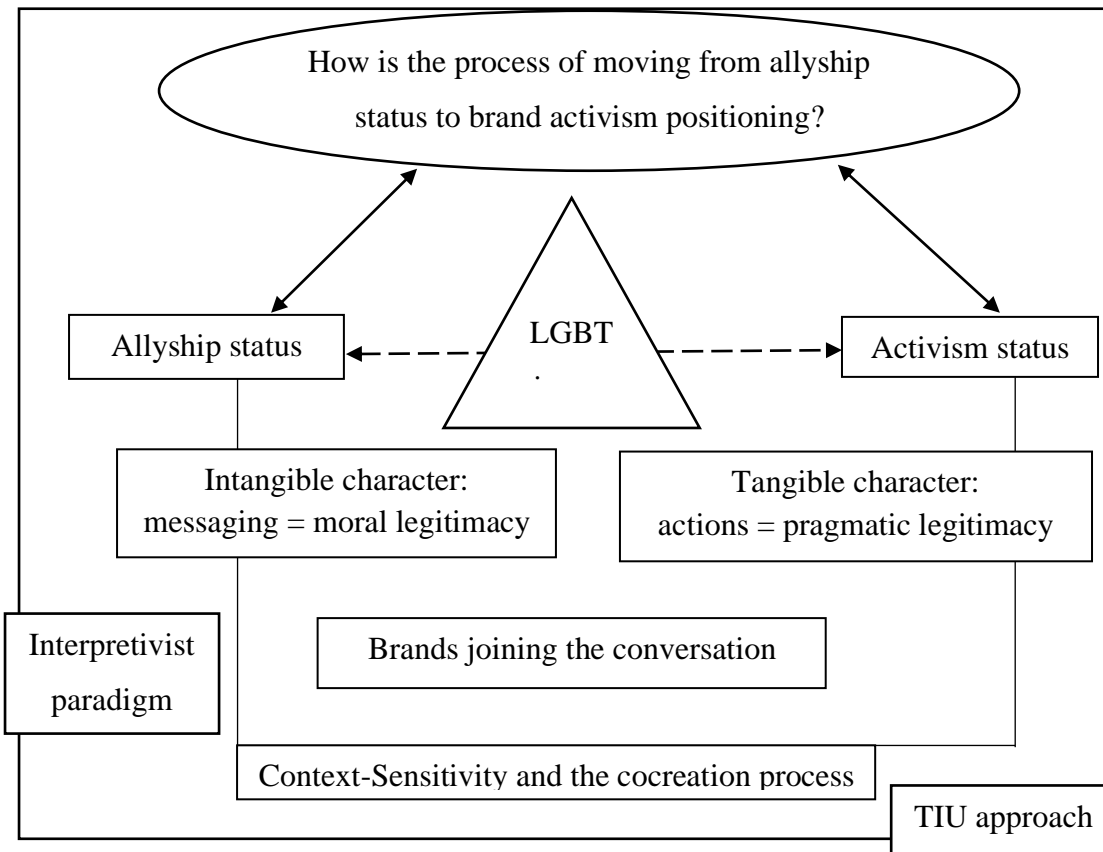
Brands must know the communities and markets where they operate (United Nations Human Rights Office, 2017) for these actions to be intrinsically motivated rather than extrinsic, achieving more positive outcomes (Li, 2022).

This legitimacy - one of the components of authenticity (Nunes et al. 2021) - is defined as the social fit of the brand with the community-shared norms (Kates, 2004) and is measured through the social fitness of brands to become LGBT allies or activists and accessing both statuses, being context-sensible. Winning legitimacy is long-term oriented, overcoming short-term benefits, such as good press (Soobaroyen & Ntim, 2013). Understood as a symbolic resource, the efforts to gain and control legitimacy occur through strategies and

actions, referring to strategic legitimacy and legitimisation (Marion, 2006). In other words, the legitimacy of brands stems from what those they interact with grant them by acknowledging their right to join the conversation and celebrate Pride: LGBT voices and regulators, customers, consumers, and other stakeholders. So, marketing produces legitimacy in the LGBT allyship and activism market positionings and statuses insofar as those involved in society believe in this legitimacy (Marion, 2006). Thus, brands pursue legitimacy through making promises and fulfilling them. They feed the relationship between the brand, the market, and the communities of the social issue addressed. That said, authenticity goes beyond advocacy/messaging (Wettstein & Baur, 2016), and is backed up by actions and policies (Kapitan et al. 2019), donations (Crimmins & Horn, 1996), partnerships (Duane & Domegan, 2019; Miguel & Miranda, 2023), and third-party certifications (Miguel & Miranda, 2023). That way, brands reflect the consumer values, helping them to construct who they are (Morhart et al. 2015). Brand meanings must result from co-creation processes between distinct players. Miguel and Miranda (2023) highlight that companies acquire legitimacy in their activist actions only by gaining authenticity. This legitimacy differs from legitimisation as a continuous reiteration of the marketing promises to answer the new expectations, needs, and demands of the market, consumers, and communities (Carroll, 2008; Hashem et al. 2023; Kotler & Sarkar, 2017).

Muniz et al. (2019) say that companies must communicate their CSR initiatives to consumers to create or reinforce awareness. Corporate LGBT messaging contributes to brand legitimacy. However, excessive public promotion can lead to irritation. Fournier and Lee (2009) argue that people relate to brands similar to how they engage with people. Exploring this idea demands exploring the brand-community engagement concept. Aksoy et al. (2013) describe it as "the consumer's intrinsic motivation to interact and cooperate with community members" (p.229). Also, we conceptualize the purpose of CSR communication to gain legitimacy, blended with the goal of identity and meaning creation. The first step to move from the allyship status to the activism mode and to create a purpose-driven brand is to implement corporate practices and policies. The following proposition will be under analysis to explore this claim:

P1: Corporate LGBT messaging and advocacy to publicize corporate practices and policies potentially contribute to the necessary legitimacy for brands to become activists that successfully join the LGBT conversation during Pride month.

Brands can get involved for several reasons, from connecting with target audiences to creating change. Unpacking legitimacy allows us to understand authenticity. Brands are cultural resources when understood as legitimate institutions cocreated between the community and the corporation. Kozinets (2002) describes it as a group of consumers who ban popular brands and are on the opposite side of mass-marketed brands. However, these mainstream brands are also the ones who have more power and responsibilities. From managers and marketers to activists, leaders, customers, or public policymakers, all have mental models (Argyris & Schon, 1974) elicited by TIU research to surface novel theories. Still, few researchers pursue TIU research (Zeithaml et al. 2020), which promotes the creation of an issue-centric framework that highlights the different forms of taking stands on LGBT issues.

Considering United Nations Human Rights Office (2017) standards for becoming activists' brands must stand up for human rights where they do business, provide a positive workplace environment, prevent human rights violations, and act in the public and political sphere. Rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-themed collections aren't enough, depending on the context. Without broader strategies, including donations to an LGBT cause, a fight against discrimination in the workplace, a celebration of solid partnerships with LGBT activists or NGOs, and implementation of prosocial corporate practices, Queer imagery become a way of rainbow-washing through the instrumental use of LGBT symbols with performative purposes only. Designed 40 years ago to represent dignity, diversity and coherence, supporters and detractors have been using the rainbow flag for multiple purposes. The use of the rainbow flag shows an increasing instrumental use of the symbol, reflecting the growing visibility of the community. We address only this specific flag as we currently have more than 15 types of flags to represent the subgroups of the LGBT+ community. How are brands joining the LGBT conversation and fulfilling their journey to strengthen their allyship status and market positionings and become activists? The following proposition will be under analysis to explore this question:

P2: Rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns (Queer imagery) are instruments to support LGBT people, promoting the conversation about the LGBT cause and increasing awareness.

The conceptual model explores the brands' impacts on the LGBT conversation. Prior research has studied the stakeholder outcomes (Carroll & Shabana 2010). Corporate LGBT messaging, being strategic, is vital to brand activism as an interdisciplinary concept connected with CSR and political consumption concepts within the context of this research, referring to the discourse constructed through the dialogue between brands and their stakeholders (Tang et al. 2015).

The pressures from stakeholders to get involved may justify the increasing willingness of brands to take sides on socio-political issues (Ahmad et al. 2022). Dialogue is a relevant concept once this study draws from the framework of CSR research (Kim, 2019). Dialogue means to be part of the conversation. We examine how brands dialogue and communicate their commitment to LGBT issues to understand if what they preach can be perceived as decoupled from their practices. Moorman's (2020) work on brand political activism is vital to examine LGBT brand activism. We consider the three brand characteristics:

- Purpose and values-driven;
- Addresses a controversial issue;
- Contributes toward the LGBT conversation through messaging and practice.

As more brands create well-defined social-purpose strategies (Vilá & Bharadwaj, 2017), practitioners must identify the best social need to engage with to generate positive insights, as their market positioning is rooted in consumer preferences (Herrmann & Huber, 2000).

Kim (2019) proposes an avenue to understand communication from the CSR approach that highlights communication as the continuum process of making sense of the situations in which people collectively find themselves and the events that affect them. This avenue opens the door to the idea that the communicative constitution of brands can rely on new and traditional media to give legitimacy to develop messages on LGBT issues. Moorman (2020) provides seven perspectives on brand activism, as shown in Figure 5. They define the degree to which brands are activists. In other words, to evaluate the brand positioning in the specific context or social issue.

We take five lenses: brand authenticity, cultural authority, calculative, educators, and political mission. We exclude the corporate citizen for the little guidance to marketers (Moorman, 2020) and the employee engagement focused on employer branding.

Figure 5. The seven perspectives of brand activism (developed from Moorman's (2020) model).

> **Employee engagement**: Acquisition, retention, and productivity.

> **Educators**: Move consumers in a direction that is better for society

> **Calculate**: It may be instrumental but not necessarily manipulative.

> **Corporate citizen**: political actors, but without saying how to select the issues to support. Positively contribute to the world.

> **Political mission**: linked to social change. Products and services are viewed as tools for creating change in the world.

> **Cultural authority**: engagement with societal-level issues. Authority must be earned.

> **Brand authenticity**: brands are political when they can do so in a consistent way with the target markets.

More than societal expectations from the brands, consumers require brands to act beyond their commercial goals. These expectations are getting more attention from brands (Kotler & Sarkar, 2017) for several reasons: Millennial brands promote more social responsibility than those that are concerned only with their commercial goals (Carroll, 2008), influencing the purchase intention (Chang & Cheng, 2015) and brand image promotion (Du et al. 2007). Taking a position can originate aligned and misaligned stakeholders (Moorman, 2020), and it can lead to the consumer's decision to punish the brand (Hong & Li, 2021). These brand attitudes are driven by their familiarity, confidence, and trust in a brand, as the higher they are, the greater their expected purchasing intention (Hashem et al. 2023). The following proposition is under study:

P3: The popularity of LGBT issues and the societal expectations from the brands positively affect the brands' willingness to take public stands for the causes, moving from allyship to activism.

The institutional theory (Campbell, 2007) argues that legitimacy contributes to the survival of corporations (Ellerup Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018), being relevant to understanding brand allyship and activism, as this last construct is the willingness to take a stand on polarising

socio-political issues. The question arises: when should a brand be regarded as legitimate (Black, 2009)?

We must recognise legitimacy from a normative and sociological concept, meaning social credibility and acceptability. That said, the brand's initiatives and actions to pursue the ally and activist market positioning and to access the ally and activist statuses are seen as proper, desirable or reasonable (Black, 2009). When we dive into the context of our research, the LGBT voices and actors become the regulatory strings to access the ally or activist statuses. Brand stakeholders become the strings to build the ally and activist market positions. Brands may claim legitimacy through legitimisation messaging and actions to enter into relationships to gain it.

The core relies on understanding legitimacy as the acceptance of the brand's willingness to join the LGBT conversation and celebrate Pride by others and the reasons for that acceptance. These reasons are sensitive as they define the community's and consumer's reactions, from backlash and pinkwashing accusations to support and loyalty. This acceptance lies in the brand's promises and actions consistent with a person's expectations and beliefs. The pragmatic and moral dynamics are two sets of reasons for social acceptance identified by institutionalist theorists (Black, 2009) in what we define as the legitimacy market to become a [brand] ally or activist within the LGBT issues

Suchman (1995) argues that legitimacy is a negotiation among consumers as the perception that the actions of a corporation are appropriate within a socially constructed system of values, norms, and beliefs.

According to Suchman's process to gain legitimacy, we can identify three dynamics: moral, pragmatic, and cognitive. The moral and pragmatic dynamics incorporate public dialogues between organisations and their audiences and rely on discursive evaluations (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. The legitimacy market triangle

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│   Beliefs, expectations, │
│   promises, exchanges,   │
│   actions, and outcomes. │
└─────────────────────────┘


┌──────────────┐                          ┌──────────────┐
│  Regulators  │ ◄──────────────────────► │ Stakeholders │
└──────────────┘                          └──────────────┘
```
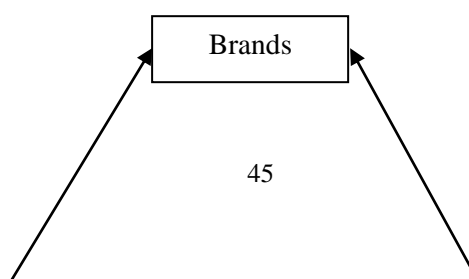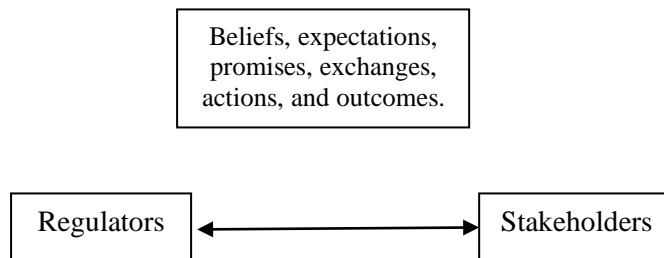
The pragmatic dynamic refers to work to satisfy the expectations and needs of its audiences, which may imply direct exchanges between both actors when applied to the marketing context. These exchanges can be tangible (e.g., products, collections, gifts-in-kind, crisis support services to LGBT+ people and advocacy groups) or financial (e.g., donations and dividends) (Soobaroyen & Ntim, 2013). It also connects to the audience's perception of the organisation being responsible for their interests, understood as influence legitimacy. For example, a collaboration with LGBT activists signal a willingness by the company to speak out and conquer some authority to the affected audience. The pragmatic dynamic is where the organisation shows its disposition to the broad objectives of the targeted audience (Suchman, 1995).

On the other side, moral legitimacy relies on judgements as to whether a specific action is the right one or it is not the right one (Suchman, 1995). These judgements depend on the audience's socially constructed value system (Soobaroyen & Ntim, 2013). It has three applicable forms: consequential (accomplishments and outputs), procedural (adoption of socially accepted techniques and procedures) and structural (when an audience perceives the company to be authentic and consequently worthy of support). The consequential form of moral legitimacy results from adopting procedures and techniques; the procedural form is the communication of social outcomes (useful in scenarios where there are no favourable outcome measures and, for example, a company shares details of how its social programmes); and the structural form reflects intrinsic features that are worthy of support (e.g., the company board has a sub-committee dedicated to addressing LGBT acceptance in the workplace).

The legitimisation process is how corporations and brands (through their managers) seek to gain pragmatic and moral legitimacy (Soobaroyen & Ntim, 2013), and it can be reached by

two general means, according to Ashforth and Gibbs (1990): substantive and symbolic management.

Substantive management implies a change in goals, structures, processes, and practices to follow the "performance expectations of those societal actors upon which it depends for critical resources" (Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990: 178). For example, in response to the rise of anti-trans laws or the criminalisation of LGBT communities in several countries, corporations can invest in brand activism programs and campaigns to support their staff and families. Suchman (1995) also suggests several substantive strategies, including conforming to international standards (e.g., UN LGBTI Standards of Conduct for Business) and certification (e.g., Pride 365 Certified). Brands also have available participation in programs or indexes such as the Diversity Champions Programme by Stonewall UK and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Corporate Equality. Newson and Deegan (2002) argue change needs communication. The annual reports may be critical to this. In contrast, symbolic management implies superficial impressions of performative allyship (Spielmann et al. 2023) and projects an appearance alignment between corporate activities and social values and expectations. Ashforth and Gibbs (1990) suggest some examples of isolated symbolic strategies, including:

- Hiding information that could damage authenticity and legitimacy;
- Advocating socially acceptable values and goals but not being aligned with these values and planning to meet these goals;
- Providing ceremonial conformity with societal expectations without giving tangible practices that are consistent and visible.

Companies create LGBT-friendly brands but may not walk the talk. Or create compelling storytelling without visible story actions. Rhetoric is the goal, the real deal (message-practice incoherence). To gain legitimacy, brands face a social and political process, and the success of legitimation is measured by how the audience responds to it. The increasing popularity of moral legitimacy, referring to consumers questioning whether brands benefit the community (Kates, 2005), allows brands to become activists. We must explore the influence of moral responsibility within brand activism. As Jansen (2013) suggests, responsibility includes what is morally indispensable. Thus, brands achieve and maintain their moral fit with key publics by adhering to the social norms, cultural meanings, and

ideals associated with a community (Kates, 2005). The socio-cultural alignment defines if a brand is legitimate (Suchman, 1995).

Legitimacy aims to overpass the LGBT distrust of corporations when they take public stands, as the political roots of LGBT activism are hostile to capitalist interests (Kates, 2005). Communication in the LGBT context is an instrument to achieve it, supported by the CSR Promotional Dilemma (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). As a documentation discipline, CSR communication responds to the demand for accountability and transparency in brand activism activities. As a rhetorical device, CSR communication is pinkwashing and a PR invention (Ellerup Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018). Authenticity and legitimacy come with accountability (Tamvada, 2020). To join Pride Month, brands need to conquer legitimacy, and brand communication might be an instrument to achieve this strategic positioning. That said, the following proposition is proposed:

P4: To meaningfully celebrate Pride, fulfil their political mission and avoid pinkwashing accusations, brands must conquer pragmatic and moral legitimacy.

The Parade for LGBT Pride originated in the US to commemorate the Stonewall Inn riot in New York (Barrientos et al. 2010) in June 1969. Fifty years later, Pride moved from one day to a month, from June to the entire year, being a protest, an homage, and a celebration. Nowadays, there are over 200 LGBT Pride around the world (IGLTA, 2022), but how are brands celebrating LGBT Pride? Rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-themed are small gestures that clever brands (Simon, 2011) use to engage with an audience without alienating potential consumers. Brands do not want to walk the talk, creating symbolic actions to solve social problems. In other words, as De Miguel Zamora and y Toledano Cuevas-Mons (2018) claim, it is vital to ensure consistency between brands' storytelling and their storydoing. The opposite stance is to mobilize people and resources through communication, networking, and education. The following proposition arises:

P5: To be an activist brand within the LGBT context, putting a rainbow up for Pride month is a symbolic move from a broader strategic communication that pushes the brand's contribution forward and its contribution toward the LGBT conversation.

The purpose of Pride parades is the same as in 1970: promote the visibility and validate the existence of LGBT people (InterPride, 2009).

Academic researchers have described Pride events as attempts to claim public space and challenge dominant attitudes towards homosexuality (Brickell, 2000; Browne, 2007). There is a continuing exchange of shared meanings between the LGBT community and brands, rewarding legitimate brands and reinforcing legitimacy. The point is if a brand's actions provide social benefits congruent with the value system of the stakeholders (Suchman, 1995) and its pressures or expectations.

Our five propositions create an interchangeable connection between brand communication and brand activism within the LGBT context. As businesses build the expectation that they will fight against prejudice, they must not do the bare minimum. Brand activism implies connecting, and it comes with a deep respect for the community, going beyond rhetoric, symbolism, and promises.

CHAPTER 4

4. Methodology and Research Process

The methodology strategy refers to the research context, selection of initiatives to investigate our propositions, data collection, generation, and analysis, and quality criteria (Dreyer-Gibney et al. 2022). The conceptual model and methodology strategy seek to provide relevant and insightful findings (Sobh & Perry, 2005).

4.1. Research process and protocol

We follow the research onion research concept (Figure 7) by Saunders et al. (2016) to construct the research methodology model and describe our methodology.

Figure 7. Research onion
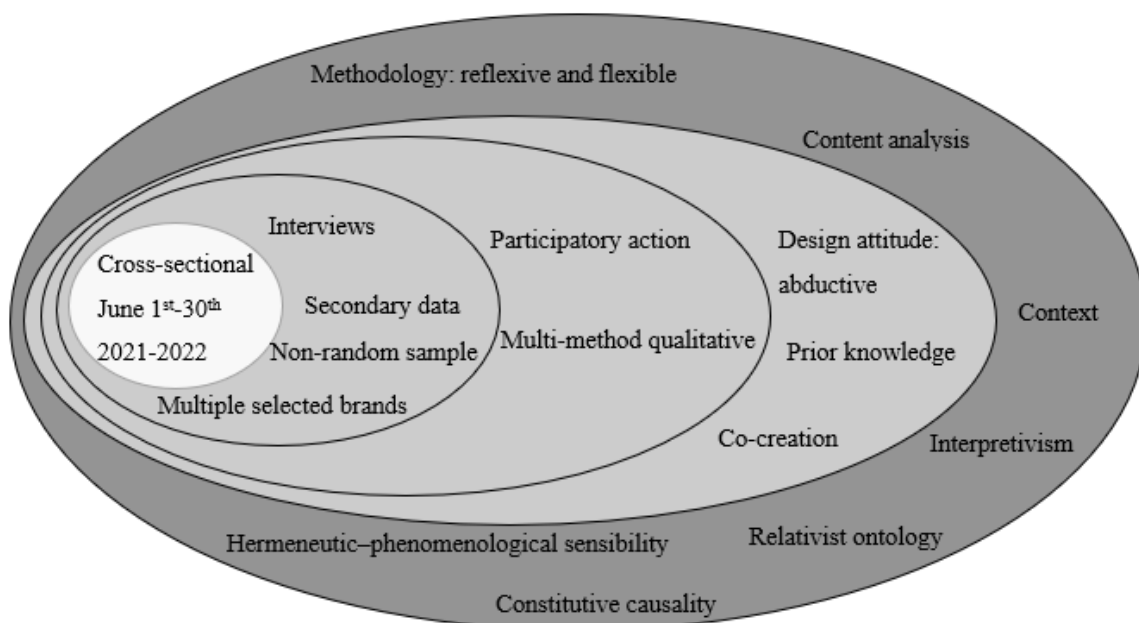
The underlying research question sought to assess the process of moving from allyship to brand activism within the marketing strategy of Pride. The research protocol comes out from this research onion (Table 3).

Table 3. Research Protocol (adapted from Kelliher, 2005)

Activity	Description
Research question	How is the process of moving from allyship to brand activism market positioning within the LGBT context?
Research method	Multi-method qualitative.
Research design	Creative-relational inquiry, context-sensitive, exploratory and participatory action research (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Green et al. 1995; Khanlou & Peter, 2005).
Critical incident	Strategic communication and brand activism market positioning within the LGBT context and Pride marketing campaigns.
Research approach	Theories-in-use.
Research paradigm	Interpretive paradigm.
Reasoning	Abductive logic of reasoning.
Strategy	Reflexive and flexible.
Case selection process	Brands celebrating 2021 & 2022 Pride in their Instagram accounts.
Case access	Controversial; multi-experience of Queerness; internal support; Pride content on Instagram posts and website; association with spokespersons or third parties; encourage change; purpose driven.
Sample	Small, purpose and non-random sample.
Unit selection	The criterium was relevance rather than representativeness
Research instrument	Researcher as the primary research instrument.
Theory holders	The research participants.
Data collection & research techniques	Primary (in-depth interviews) and secondary sources (documents and digital publications).
Data analysis	Content analysis, narrative analysis, and interpretation. Data reduction and display.
Data management	Collection methods and sources, including triangulation.

Note: The protocol reduces misperception during the research process.

4.2.   Research method

We aim to provide relevant findings (Sobh & Perry, 2006) to develop strategic communication and activism efforts for brands that want to address social issues. Our

research followed an exploratory research design based on content analysis with a qualitative lens (Miranda et al. 2020), including different sources of data: in-depth interviews (creative-relational inquiry inspired) and secondary data (online publications – website and Instagram – and relevant documents produced by organizations). We use the theories-in-use approach to address research questions for which we don't have good answers (Zeithaml et al. 2020). The strategy execution follows various steps:

1. The focal research constructs are defined in the study through interviews. The individuals who are not access because they decline are replaced by others who do agree or accept to participate (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012);

2. Triangulation of sources and methods is used to compare and provide a deeper perspective regarding the brand's campaigns during Pride month;

3. As these interviews happened, the propositions were revisited and improved;

4. Examination of how propositions contribute to the literature based on the review of data across participants, identification of frequent ideas, and building blocks of theory;

5. Verify if propositions and arguments meet plausibility, alignment, interest, and informational value. The interviews allow us to advance in the constructs and propositions.

6. Typologies construction, according to brand activism efforts within Pride marketing campaigns during June. This work got support from our conceptual model and the UN Human Rights Office's four dimensions of the five standards of conduct for business.

These steps follow the TIU approach and give power to the theory holders – our study participants. The interrelated ideas are our starting point for harvesting constructs and propositions (Zeithaml et al. 2020). We recognize our enrolment in the intersubjective social processes of the constructs as we interpret knowledge and the reality is understood and described (epistemology – what can we know about it).

The interpretive paradigm (McChesney & Aldridge, 2019) allows us to explore our object of study. Focusing on the participants' worlds places interpretation at the heart of analysis, as our research object is explored from the participant's points of view (ontology), giving the stakeholder's perceptions a role in the reading of reality (quality criteria). Their views are influenced by the beliefs, experiences, and meanings they hold (relativist ontology – What's out there to know about?). An external reality exists but it can't be objectively captured (Willis, 2007). Considering its ontology, methodology and axiology, we combine exploratory and participatory action research (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Green et al. 1995; Khanlou & Peter, 2005). Therefore, we actively promote the engagement of the community of interest in the research process (La Scala et al. 2022).

Content analysis and narrative analysis are useful to discover patterns on which we can formulate new theories (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991) and to justify established patterns which validate (or not) existing theories (Carlson et al. 1993).

We have multiple brands under analysis, implying an analytic approach with a detailed description of the case and its contextual conditions (Yin, 2014). The interpretive position requires a focus on contextual meaning (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012) and the iterative–recursive processes characteristic of an abductive logic of reasoning (we move from data to argument). The qualitative approach entails sources of information (Creswell et al. 2007) such as interviews and digital documents or data.

From the participatory action research (PAR) design, the process promotes the collaboration of researchers and participants at all levels of the investigation. We use PAR definitions of Cancian (1996, p.188), described as "radical type of activist research", and Hall (1981, p.6), understood as "a process of research, education, and action", to find suitable interpretations for brand communication and activism within the LGBT context and Pride marketing. One of the most used forms of PAR is action research (Creswell et al. 2007), which gives methods to deal with critical social problems (Lewin, 1946). Our strategy is reflexive and flexible, instead of a rigid research design. There are three levels of analysis: individual, interpersonal, and group, and they matter considering that our participants evaluate the relevance and validity of the research process (Khanlou and Peter, 2005). The interview has a constructionist core, as seeks for an empathetic connection with the participant and to co-construct data (Roulston, 2010).

The TIU relies on one-on-one participant conversations and elicits theories from a small, purposeful and non-random sample (Cohen et al. 2007). The data analysis demands an interpretive approach to derive underlying meaning from the topic under research. Authenticity and its dynamics of (pragmatic and moral) legitimacy is in our study, which might lead to concept reconstruction (Nunes et al. 2021) to ensure consistency, especially when the concepts need to be revised (Blumer, 1969). The process began with a literature review of brand activism ideas in prior literature within the LGBT conversation and Pride marketing. We then build the qualitative fieldwork for our theory and propositions, examining data extracted from the Instagram official accounts and websites of the brands selected and from the in-depth interviews.

Interpretivism recognises what might work regarding the corporate attitude's identification toward brand activism and what efforts arise from its construction. The qualitative lens deepens the investigation to understand how brands work as allies and activists through messaging and action (Miranda et al. 2020), framed by moral and pragmatic dynamics. With the rise of societal issues, the moral, the social and the political are at the heart of the qualitative inquiry. Creative-relational inquiry, being context-sensitive, deeply connected with theory, curious about the process (Center for Creative-Relational Inquiry, 2021), and open to dynamic and fluid collaborations (Wyatt, 2022), fits this flexible exploratory research (Malhotra, 2010). The interpretive paradigm focuses on macro-level corporate and societal messages and actions. The prior theory (Sobh & Perry, 2006) has two stages.

Stage one is exploratory, as the literature goes around sequential interview data. We read the literature about the topic under the analysis of the first interview and continue reading it while the interviewing phase continues. Prior knowledge is relevant to selecting the interviewees and to produce knowledge. Stage two occurs after the exploration of patterns and concepts. We identify critical issues and gather examples of brand activism efforts related to Pride marketing (typology development, see Table 5). Triangulation provides helpful answers (Pawson & Tilley, 1997) to capture a single and complex reality. We use triangulation of methods and sources to collect and analyse data to explore validity through the convergence of information. Interpretivism data analysis doesn't use mere numbers as it is concerned with the 'reasons why' (Sobh & Perry, 2006). We start with a broad research question, establish systematic data collection, and ensure case access to create

strong triangulated measures (Carter et al. 2014). Triangulation strengthens the validation of our research by combining participant interviews with secondary data sources (Carter et al. 2014; Kelliher, 2005). For the selection of units of analysis, known as replication, we believe that contextuality allows us to understand the underlying structure of objects and mechanisms, as contextual replication implies that social phenomena demand multiple examples, which doesn't mean multiple respondents in a survey. The criteria for unit selection are relevance rather than representativeness (Stake, 1994). We try to verify the conceptual model developed through the same interview protocol across all participants. But first, we explain the goal of the investigation. We employ in-depth interviews following a semi-structured script. Before the interviews, participants have access to the investigation resume, sent by email. We explore insider's views and identify if there is a continuing exchange of shared meanings through processes reinforcing cognitive legitimacy and assessing pragmatic and moral legitimacy. We collected actions from 20 brands (Table 4) during the 2021 and 2022 Pride months in June (cross-sectional), including Instagram publications and website content. We don't distinguish between targets as Maks-Solomon and Drewry (2020) do by separating marketing from corporate activism or B2B from B2C brand activism. On the 1st of 2021, we started to search for brands celebrating Pride worldwide to build our purpose sample. This search included media coverage, Instagram publications, and website campaigns. After one month of searching, we selected brands with Pride marketing campaigns, reaching 20 brands.

The second stage was to archive content where a selected brand engaged with the LGBT cause from the 1st of June to the 30th of June, allowing a comparative approach (Holt, 2004) and the theorisation of the phenomenon. We follow complementary criteria:

- Use of the LGBT flag;
- Pride publications on Instagram feed during Pride month in 2021;
- Brands from various markets;
- Use of descriptions/writing related to Pride.

This sample permits us to analyse, compare, and deeply explore each one regarding their purpose-driven communication and actions. They provide a heterogeneous sample to achieve theoretical insights (Patton, 2002) for qualitative studies.

Table 4. The 20 brands selected to explore our conceptual model

Brand	Website	Instagram	Country
Control Portugal	www.control.pt	@controlportugal	Portugal
Abercrombie & Fitch	www.abercrombie.com/shop/eu	@abercrombie	USA
C&A	https://www.c-and-a.com/eu/en/shop	@ca	Belgium
Levi's	https://www.levi.com/US/en_US	@levis	USA
Crate and Barrel	www.crateandbarrel.com	@crateandbarrel	USA
Danone Portugal	https://www.danone.com	@danone.pt	Portugal
Farfetch	www.farfetch.com/pt	@farfetch	Portugal
Happy Socks	https://www.happysocks.com	@/happysocks	Sweden
Harrys	https://www.harrys.com/en	@harrys	USA
Havaianas	https://www.havaianas-store.com/en	@havaianas	Brazil
Ikea	https://www.ikea.com/	@ikea	Sweden
Confections	https://confectionstx.co	@sugarcookieart	USA
Lego	https://www.lego.com	@lego	Denmark
L'Oréal Paris	www.loreal.com/en	@lorealparis	France
Mercedes-Benz	www.mercedes-benz.pt	@mercedesbenz	Germany
Pantone	www.pantone.com	@pantone	USA
Polo Club	www.poloclub.com	@poloclub	Spain
PUMA	https://eu.puma.com/de/en/home	@puma	Germany
The Body Shop	www.thebodyshop.com	@thebodyshop	UK
Patagonia	www.patagonia.com	@patagonia	USA

Note: overview of the 20 brands selected for this exploratory study.

The research legitimisation of the results is guaranteed (Kelliher, 2005), as we don't seek to make generalisations but to verify the existence of a phenomenon (Van Maanen, 1988). Data reduction and display are used for analysis (Sobh & Perry, 2006). Data reduction is how codes are generated for use in the first stage of reducing the data to a manageable form. We only consider the relevant perspectives and experiences of the external reality. The codes that we will use to minimise data are generated from the conceptual model, based on the construction of the theoretical framework, descriptive coding (word/ short phrase the topic of a passage of qualitative data), selective coding pass of comparisons and

interpretations, and axial coding pass, where codes from the model are allocated to chunks of text. Regarding the axial coding, we establish the connections between brand efforts to move from allyship to activism within the LGBT context and Pride marketing. We find more significant picture ideas, as they describe a category property and dimensions and explore how the categories and subcategories are related (Saldaña, 2016). That way, we can identify the dominant codes. Finally, synonyms and redundancies are removed. We also link categories with subcategories, explore how they are related, and specify the properties and dimensions of a category (Saldaña, 2016).

Finally, these codes are developed into a code structure, which includes:
- The compilation of the data into codes.
- Brief definitions for each code.
- Illustrative quotes from the interview transcripts that demonstrate the definition for each code.

The final code structure presented in this research study is the final result of moving back and forward between transcripts and qualitative data analysis levels. That said, there's the following brief of the code structure process:

1. Axial coding: synonyms and redundancies are removed.

2. We identify dominant codes, which go to chunks of text.

3. Find significant picture ideas to establish the connections between allyship status and brand activism strategies, as it describes a category property and dimensions and explores how the categories and subcategories are related (Saldaña, 2016).

4. Explore how types and their subcategories are related and specify the definitions, properties and dimensions of a category.

5. Descriptive coding: short phrase the topic of a passage of qualitative data.

4.3. Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are the criteria used to develop research that is precise and with practical use (Raymond-Alain Thiétart et al. 2001). We must use other items in the interpretive research (Zeithaml et al. 2020). These items are distinctiveness, credibility,

transferability, and confirmability. From the epistemological perspective, we do not define our evidence as objectively mirroring the world. Our methodology is reflexive, emphasising transparency about the analytic processes. Healy and Perry (2000) measure validity and reliability based on ontological appropriateness and contingent validity, perceptions of participants, methodological trustworthiness, analytic generalisation, and construct validity. Triangulation gives consistency and reliability if reaching the same conclusions (Denzin, 1970). Regarding validation, we present descriptive data to provide a comprehensive framework regarding the topic under study (Stake, 1995). We follow Angen's (2000) view of validity as a validation process. The evaluation of trustworthiness takes place in a community, and conclusions are open to reinterpretation. Explaining our standards:

1. Distinctiveness is the extent to which our construct and theoretical contribution are different from existing constructs;

2. Credibility is the extent to which a new theory's propositions are plausible;

3. Transferability is the extent to which propositions are valid in contexts not included in the study;

4. Confirmability is the extent to which the construct and the propositions can be independently certified as emerging from the data.

Following the selected criteria, the current research answers two concerns: assessing the relevance and the precision of research results (internal validity) and assessing the extent to which we can generalise from these results (external validity).

4.4. Typology development and code structure

The research considers the strategically developed efforts regarding the LGBT cause to establish two brand market positions in consumers' minds: allyship and activism. This research also studies the work to access allyship and activism statuses. As controversy is inherent to the LGBT movement, we will not include this category in the typology development. Our typology relies on our conceptual model and the UN Human Rights Offices' four dimensions of the five standards of conduct for business, resulting in the following categories:

(a) **LGBT facts** (respect human rights dimension = be purpose-driven and promote dialogue about multi-experience of Queerness).

(b) **Queer Imagery** (act in the public dimension). Researchers add the symbolism.

(c) **Product orientation** (marketplace dimension, including collections and donations).

These typologies reflect the nature of brand activism within the LGBT conversation through Pride marketing campaigns and LGBT messages/ practices on Instagram and websites by the brands selected for the research (guaranteeing the act in the public dimension). To enhance the study of long-term commitments versus pinkwashing, we included five more typologies:

(d) **Time-space** (all-time versus only during Pride dimension = celebrating Pride all year).

(e) **Internal support** (workplace dimension = policies and employees' testimonials).

(f) **Collaborations and partnerships**. Communication of these partnerships and collaboration (spokespersons, associations, activists) with an external third party.

(g) **Engagement with the community**. Proximity with the LGBT communities to identify what approaches to take and the issues to fight against.

(h) **Vague messaging**. Lack of tangible practices.

The list of the claim type categories is in Table 5, including examples from the 20 selected brands for this thesis work.

Table 5. Eight type categories of brand activism efforts: Pride marketing campaigns

LGBT facts: the claim involves a statement about the LGBT community.

Example (a): "In 68 countries, homosexuality is a crime".

Example (b): "This year we have put our Pride budget to better use, through donating it to @InterPride. Doing this, we aim to make a real difference to the LGBTQIA+ community, which still faces extreme challenges in many parts of the globe. 🏴 In fact, same sex relations

are punishable with imprisonment in 57 countries. This needs to change. 🖱️".

Queer Imagery: the claim associates the brand with the LGBT movement and conversation targeting symbolic value.

Example (a): rainbow logo.

Example (b): "Sound ON for the timeless and inspiring words of Gilbert Baker, creator of the rainbow flag. Let's continue to build a world where everyone feels at home."

Product orientation: the claim focuses on the LGBT-friendly connection that a product possesses related with tangible exchanges. Includes donations.

Example (a): "We're so proud to share our newest #HavaianasPride campaign with you, here's a sneak peek! Any guesses on what song we chose to celebrate love?"

Example (b): "Get into your favorite looks to let your personality shine – for LGBTQIA+U+ME, for everyone!".

Time-space: the claim is only focused on Pride month or it has the potential to be all year. Related with continuity and consistency with a corporation purposes and values.

Example: "This year, we want to make things differently. We want to contribute for change, real change in the world. So, we started by updating our Pride sock design to a more inclusive one. 🧦"

Internal support: the claim deals with the brand no discrimination internal policies (corporate practice) and shows celebrate staff diversity, inclusion, belonging, and equity.

Example (a): "To celebrate #Pride2021, we partner with @brownsfashion and @brownsmens to highlight Pride pioneers. Throughout the month, our community of guest editors share their unsung heroes of the queer community who broke barriers and fearlessly paved the way. Each guest editor has chosen a charity close to their hearts that FARFETCH will donate to on their behalf. Amelia has chosen @weexistlondon, which provides funds for Trans people to pay for healthcare needs."

Example (b): "As a Danaher company we are proud to be a Silver Corporate Partner at the @humanrightscampaign. We have received a 100% score on the corporate equality index and are considered one of the best places to work for the LGBTQ+ community. #pride"

Example (c): "To celebrate #Pride2021, we ask our community of guest editors to share their Pride Pioneers — unsung heroes of the queer community who broke barriers and fearlessly paved the way. Each guest editor has chosen a charity close to their hearts that FARFETCH will donate to on their behalf. Parker has chosen @glaad, a media force rewriting the script for LGBTQ+ acceptance."

Collaborations and partnerships: the claim deals with the celebration of partnerships between the brand and an external third party, as associations, activists, among other spokespersons or partners.

Example (a): "This year, we wanted to make an impact. So, we donated 100% of our campaign budget to an organization that will make a real difference for the LGBTQIA+ Community – @InterPride".

Example (b): "Levi's x Brandon Flynn. Through exploring the full scope of the human condition in his work as an actor and advocating for LGBTQI+ rights on and off the screen, @brandonflynn is becoming.".

Engagement with the community: the claim reveals proximity with the LGBT communities to identify what approaches to take and to fight against prejudice.

Example: "Education is the most powerful tool we have. Let's use it to learn more about the mental health crisis within the LGBT+ community and what we can do to help⊕▷ Lack of understanding and willingness to learn is just as harmful as discriminative systems. Head to the link in our bio for resources to get started.".

Vague messaging: the claim deals with a lack of tangible practices (performative activism) and is related with an instrumental use of activist messages regarding LGBT issues.
Example (a): "DIVERSITY IS POWERFUL".

Example (b): "Love really does win. Thank you! #love".

Note: adapted from Carlson et al. (1993) study.

Based upon our further findings, our research aims to provide suggestions to improve the private sector efforts regarding allyship and activism within the LGBT conversation to reach a truthful alignment. The relationship between brand participation and social change is the core of this typology development and highlights the urgency of paying attention to the level of degree of message practice. From this categorization, we can deeply explore

the idea of corporate hypocrisy (Wagner et al. 2009). Our code structure aims to understand the process of moving from allyship status to activism mode within the LGBT context, overcoming promises, rhetoric and symbolism, following our research question.

4.5. Data collection

The logical development of our research topic reflects the aim to get and explore "insider's" perspectives (Deshpande, 1983: p. 103), as we seek to understand if there is a continuing exchange of shared meanings over time through processes involved with reinforcing cognitive legitimacy and assessing pragmatic and moral legitimacies.

From the cognitive legitimacy side, the research focuses on three frames: (1) insider interpretations; (2) rewarding legitimate brands; and (3) punishing illegitimate brands, constituting the LGBT community's expanded interpretive repertoire. From the moral legitimacy side, we considered the following assessments: (1) applying brand tests; (2) bridging; and (3) legitimizing through inserting brands into collective memory.

From the pragmatic legitimacy side, we have the following assessments: (1) Direct exchanges (e.g., products, gifts-in-kind, crisis support services to LGBT+ people, donations); (2) Influencing; (3) Legitimizing through being open to fulfilling audiences' broad objectives. Regarding data sources, we use subjective and fallible standards rather than objective and universal (McChesney, 2019). Data collection proceeds in five stages:

1. We decomposed three elements - purpose and values-driven brands, Pride month context, and the allyship and brand activism process through messaging and practice as the last stage of being an ally and activist, which started when an Instagram post is published;

2. Mapped out different elements of each strategy;

3. Identified the ambassadors and the association involved, as well as hashtags and copywriting (when applied);

4. Verified the use of queer imagery;

5. Collected the official website of each brand selected as units to find references to the LGBT movement or inclusion commitments (as explained in Table 6).

Collecting data about the empirical context was the first stage of our data collection (June and July 2021). This first stage repeats in June and July of 2022. These longitudinal data allow us to verify what brands remain vocal or go silent, identify patterns, and measure change. We collected secondary data about the same brands through the same channels and during the same period but in two different years: 2021 and 2022.

During this stage, we not only collected relevant data for our research (Pride content published from 1st June to 30th June) but also collected LGBT content published throughout the year for internal purposes only, allowing us to identify brands that engage with the community all year, but we will not use this data in the current research.

Table 6 displays the data set overview for 2021 and 2022 and the results from this stage 1.

Table 6. Data set overview 2021-2022

Type of data	Quantity	More details
Websites	20	Analysis of brands' strategy.
Instagram posts during Pride	301	Copy, images, and hashtags.
Rainbow logos	6	Elements to create the study sample.

Note: overview of the content collected in stage 1.

In the second stage, we began with the in-depth interviews, scheduled to finish at the end of November 2022. However, it finished in April 2023 due to the interviewees' schedules. The selected brands have been contacted by email to schedule interviews conducted in English and recorded, as well as the potential interviewees. We invited 263 potential participants between June 2022 and February 2023 (see Table 7).

Table 7. Invitations sent (in 2022 and 2023) to be interviewed for the research

Category	Country	Quantity	Total (per category)
Media	UK	4	
	USA	9	
	Ireland	1	
	Canada	1	**15**
Activists	Botswana	1	
	Brazil	2	

	Bulgary	1	
	Canada	1	
	Denmark	2	
	Fiji	1	
	Gana	3	
	India	1	
	New Zealand	1	
	Netherlands	1	
	Portugal	5	
	UK	22	
	USA	23	**64**
Associations	Switzerland	1	
	Belgium	2	
	Thailand	1	
	South Africa	1	
	UK	8	
	USA	10	
	Sweden	1	
	Nigeria	1	
	Canada	1	
	Netherlands	1	
	Brazil	1	
	France	1	
	Germany	1	
	Netherlands	2	
	Denmark	2	
	Spain	2	**36**
Outside marketers	Spain	3	
	Portugal	27	
	Italy	1	
	Switzerland	1	
	France	4	
	Australia	2	
	Brazil	1	

	Denmark	2	
	Mexico	1	
	Norway	1	
	Singapore	1	
	Thailand	1	
	UK	14	
	USA	23	**82**
Inside marketers and DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) manager	Germany	2	
	Belgium	1	
	France	4	
	Denmark	1	
	India	1	
	Portugal	11	
	Netherlands	1	
	Kuwait	1	
	Sweden	4	
	United Arab Emirates	1	
	Spain	4	
	UK	5	
	USA	7	**43**
Others	UK	8	
	USA	5	
	Canada	1	
	Brazil	1	
	France	1	
	Germany	1	
	Netherlands	2	
	Denmark	2	
	Spain	2	**23**
			263 invitations

These in-depth interviews provided information about the internal processes adopted by the selected brands when the invitation was accepted and about the external perspectives of relevant actors, including associations, activists, marketers, and others.

Table 8 shows the distribution of actors contacted for an interview, including three possible actions to our invitation: (1) accepted, (2) denied and (3) no response. From the media category, no one accepted our invitation for the interview. 25% of the activists invited for the interview phase accepted while 62.5% didn't reply to the several emails sent (we have sent at least two follow-up emails after the first one inviting them to participate in the research). The outside marketers are the category with the most significant number of invitations sent and the category with the higher percentage of no responses (77% didn't reply). The category associations have the highest number of invitations accepted (N=42%). We have 12 associations but 16 interviews. This difference in numbers occurs because we interviewed different actors working in the same association: InterPride, Pride at Work Canada, and Red Empresarial por la Diversidad e Inclusión LGBTI. See Appendix 1 for further details of the interview overview.

Table 8. Distribution of actors contacted for interview

Category	Contacted	Accepted	Denied	No response
Media	15	0	2	13
Activists	64	16	8	40
Associations	36	12 (*16) interviews	8	13
Outside marketers	82	12	7	63
Inside marketers & DEI manager	43	5	7	31
Other	23	9	2	10

The selection of the interviews follows their potential contribution to this study but also considers external constraints. The 'other' category is job roles such as researchers and diversity managers. Interview guides were designed as semi-structured scripts (see Appendix 2) and followed Zeithaml et al. (2020) guidelines:

1. We introduce the investigation;

2. Identify participants with experience in social-purpose strategies;

3. Include understanding managers' perceptions about the expected performance of LGBT brand efforts. Moreover, the last question asks if there is anything relevant, we didn't ask during the interview.

The transcription of all interviews occurred after we closed the interviews phase (the interviews were not recorded only by participants' request, with 6 participants requesting it) between February and March 2023. Then, data was analysed and compared with theory to strengthen our theoretical contribution (Rowley, 2012). For the descriptive coding, we developed a categorised inventory of the data's content, allowing further interpretation through content and cross-case analysis. We searched for patterns and differences between the selected brands and the interviewees. All analysis processes are underpinned by the data-in-context principle (McChesney, 2019) or the interpretive assumption that results reflect participant's constructions of meaning. We compare the brands under analysis and build a situated theory. To do so, we follow the criteria of Healy and Perry's (2000) work:

1. Ontological appropriateness is secured as the gap under investigation deals with a complex social phenomenon outside people's minds involving reflective people;

2. We use theoretical replication to ensure that information was obtained from appropriate and rich sources;

3. We describe the context of our interviews, including country and the relationship with brands and activism when we quote an interviewee;

4. To the methodological trustworthiness, we provide a summary of the contents of our study database in the appendix section of our research; and

5. The use of quotations to summarise our findings.

We collected all the Pride month content shared on the Instagram feed and website of our 20 units of analysis. Also, we interviewed 58 participants and recorded 52 interviews.

The main challenge has been reaching out to marketers working in our units of analysis. The overview:
- Activists are mainly from Portugal, the UK, and the US;
- Associations are mainly from the US and Argentina;
- Outside marketers are more dispersed, including countries such as Spain, Portugal, the UK, and the US;
- We have inclusion managers and researchers from the Netherlands, UK, Canada, France, and Brazil.

Throughout the interviews, we collected documents produced by the organizations (see Table 9). These documents might be publicly available or not. However, we only used documents provided by our participants as they provided us with crucial information regarding the topics discussed during the interviews.

Table 9. Documents given by the interviewees

Type	Total documents collected
Activists	1 (Deloitte)
Associations	5 (Elsevier and Workplace Pride Foundation, ILGA Europe; Pride at Work Canada, REDI Red Empresarial por la Diversidad e Inclusión LGBTI, Copenhagen Pride)
Inside marketers and DEI manager	3 (The Body Shop, Ikea, Control Portugal)

Documentary data provided information regarding how associations work with the private sector and more detailed information about some of the twenty selected brands, including Pride campaigns. We collected documents during the interviews between June 2022 and March 2023. These documents included assessments, checklists and reports. Analysing the files (see Appendix 3 for further details) allows us to identify, understand and explore how associations work with brands to develop a strategic communication that might be allyship or activism positioning within the LGBT context.

In summary, data collection has a few steps, including:

1. Stage 1: Identifying purpose-driven brands through their 2021 Pride campaigns during Pride month on their Instagram accounts. Time: May and June of 2021.

2. Stage 2: Collect all the relevant information from Instagram posts of the brands being vocal regarding LGBT issues. June Time: May, June, and July of 2021. Repeats in June and July of 2022.

3. Stage 3: Select the brands to study. Time: July, August, and September of 2021.

4. Stage 4: Identify brand ambassadors, partners and collaborations.

5. Stage 5: Organize all the information collected from the 2021 Pride Campaigns.

6. Stage 6: Identify all the potential interviewees (N=263).

7. Stage 7: Send invitations for interviews. Time: June 2022 and February 2023.

8. Stage 8: The interviews begin (in July 2022) and end in March 2023.

4.6. Data display

Data display followed three guidelines:

(a) Despite the displays could show numerical frequencies of empirical experiences, it is based on interpretations;

(b) Representative quotations in support of explanations are used and attributed to participants;

(c) Data analysis computer software is not used, as our paradigm emphasises interpretations, contexts, and connections.

Descriptive coding is the most appropriate for our qualitative study once it identifies trend topics (Wolcott, 1994) and analyses data collected across different periods and multiple channels (See Appendix 4 for further details about the interview's descriptive codification). As explained below, the coding scheme includes the typologies developed and the coding rules (axial coding, descriptive coding, and selective coding).

4.7. Data treatment and analysis

We compiled the data, disassembled and reassembled to develop interpretations and conclusions. As a qualitative data analysis focuses on the perspective and experiences of all the research study participants, combined with secondary data, we applied an iterative process with three levels: reading, digestion and interpretation. Our analysis of moving from allyship to brand activism market positioning within the LGBT context was based on a series of Pride campaigns and in-depth interviews that allowed us to be part of the construct hunting regarding brand activism. We also explored the legitimacy of brands to get involved in LGBT issues and to dive into the key steps to develop a brand activist strategy with transparency and authenticity. The purpose was to generate data to reflect the empirical reality. The study followed a data analysis procedure, as explained in Table 10.

Table 10. Data analysis procedure for the "brand activism" study

Activity	Description
Research problem	The process of moving from allyship status to brand activism within the LGBT context. We aim to search for patterns and differences.
General research question	How is the process of moving from allyship to brand activism market positioning within the LGBT context?
Specific research questions	What are the different phases of moving from allyship to brand activism? How can brands evaluate their legitimacy to get involved in the LGBT conversation? How are brands advocating and celebrating LGBT rights, acceptance, and visibility during Pride month? What is the relationship between using LGBT symbols for marketing purposes, Pride campaigns, and positive outcomes for the LGBT community? How are rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-theme campaigns (queer imagery) a form of strategic communication to impart social change? What are the key elements to develop a brand activist strategy with transparency within the LGBT context?
Propositions	**P1**: Corporate LGBT messaging and advocacy to publicize corporate practices and policies potentially contribute to the necessary legitimacy for brands to become activists that successfully join the LGBT conversation during Pride month. **P2**: Rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns (Queer imagery) are instruments to support LGBT people, promoting the conversation about the LGBT cause and increasing awareness. **P3**: The popularity of LGBT issues and the societal expectations from the brands positively affect the brands' willingness to take public stands for the causes, moving from allyship to activism. **P4**: To meaningfully celebrate Pride, fulfil their political mission and avoid pinkwashing accusations, brands must conquer pragmatic and moral legitimacy. **P5**: To be an activist brand within the LGBT context, putting a rainbow

	up for Pride month is a symbolic move from a broader strategic communication that pushes the brand's contribution forward and its contribution toward the LGBT conversation
Brands selected	Fulfil three elements: (1) purpose-driven; (2) vocal during Pride month 2021-2022; and (3) using Instagram as a channel to celebrate Pride.
Data collected / examined	Instagram's feed posts shared by the 20 brands, website information about internal supporting and Pride campaigns, and in-depth interviews.
Unit of analysis 1	Copywriting (Instagram feed posts and websites)
Unit of analysis 2	Queer imagery (Instagram and website content analysis), including rainbow logo, Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns.
Unit of analysis 3	Hashtags used in the Instagram posts.
Unit of analysis 4	Sentence (interviews).
Unit of analysis 5	Partnerships (divided in four categories: (1) activist; (2) association; (3) internal employee; and (4) other – includes partners that are not activists or associations, e.g.: governmental organizations, policymakers, artists).
Unit of analysis 6	Documents produced by brands and given to the during the interviews.
Typologies and code structure	Based on the theoretical constructs and data: (a) LGBT facts; (b) imagery; (c) product orientation; (d) time-space; (e) internal support; (f) collaborations and partnerships; (g) engagement with the community; and (h) vague messaging.
Coding scheme	Generated from the conceptual model.
Internal and external validity	Triangulation of methods and sources. Based in four elements: distinctiveness, credibility, transferability, and confirmability.

Note: adapted from the content analysis procedure developed by Howard Harris (2001).

4.7.1 Typologies for analysis

The 8-typologies of joining the LGBT conversation during Pride month are vital to analyse if these elements are in the brand's storytelling and storydoing. It allows us to explore how brands balance intangible and tangible positionings and how they are becoming activists, overpassing the allyship status. Authenticity goes beyond advocacy/messaging. The data analysis aims to explore this assumption. These typologies emerged from the theoretical knowledge and the initial insights from primary and secondary data (Harris, 2001).

CHAPTER 5

5. Results

This chapter shows the results obtained after the data collection and analysis procedures. The analysis has three distinct but complementary phases:

- Phase 1: Results of the secondary data.
- Phase 2: Results of the primary data (in-depth interviews).
- Phase 3: Results from document analysis.

We analysed 301 Instagram posts during Pride. To get more insights about each brand, see Appendix 5, which extended information on each one, from their purpose, mission, vision and values, to relevant partnerships and employee resource groups. We collected nine documents, which we detailed in Appendix 3, as already explained above. Our final purpose sample for the primary data consisted of 58 interviewees, with 28% of the participants being activists, followed by associations and outside marketers (see table 11), with a percentage of 28% (in the number of interviews done) and 21%, respectively.

Table 11. Final Sample

Type of data	Quantity	More details
Websites	20	Analysis of brands' strategy.
Instagram posts during Pride	301	Copy, images, and hashtags.
Rainbow logos	6	Element to create the study sample.
Interviews	58	16 activists, 12 associations, 12 outside marketers, 5 inside marketers and DEI managers, and 9 other profiles.
Documents	9	1 activist, 5 associations and 3 inside marketers.

5.1. Results and analysis of the secondary data: Instagram and Website

The results of the secondary data regarding Instagram and the website start with descriptive analysis. The x-ray of the 20 selected brands shows the connection with the 8-typologies of brand efforts developed in this research study to explore the level of degree

of message practice of Pride campaigns and the process of placing purposeful brands in the spectrum of allyship and activism (based on the UN LGBT standards). Finally, it seeks to understand if there is a continuous exchange of shared meaning over time.

5.1.1 Sample profile: 2021 Pride campaign

The summary of 2021 Pride campaigns launched by the 20 selected brands is in Table 12. Ikea is the only brand selected without rainbow publications on Instagram during the 2021 Pride month period (1st of June to the 30th). This exception occurred because we initially chose Ikea Portugal, which fulfils this criterion to be part of our sample. However, as we moved into collecting data, we decided to go with the headquarters and Instagram official account as it defines how the brand behaves in each market where it operates.

Rainbow-themed campaigns
Control Portugal, Danone Portugal and Patagonia didn't launch a 2021 Pride campaign (Table 13). Even without publications on its official Instagram account for Pride, Ikea Sweden launched a rainbow-themed campaign, which gave the guidelines for the Portuguese marketing campaign for June.

Rainbow-themed campaigns are the most common element of queer imagery composition, with 85% of the brands using it. But which one has the best story? Analysing Table 12, we identified patterns in how these brands share and tell their stories. We highlight the following ones:

1. Focus on the colourful and celebratory side of Pride and Pride month.

2. Lack of visibility to the combative, resilient and dangerous side of Pride.

3. The tone has a manifesto positioning, with brands' claims and efforts to mobilise their communities.

4. The main messages created by the brands associate them with targeted values, as they gravitate around words and feelings such as togetherness, love, union, equality, diversity, acceptance, comfort, security, liberty, and visibility.

5. There is an overlapping of Pride messages and Pride collections. The campaigns go from honouring the first Pride to promoting the new limited-edition jacket or walking with Pride by having Pride socks.

6. The message highlights the efforts to contribute to a better world, potentially achieving a stronger emotional connection with the targeted audience. Examples include donations from sales of the Pride collections (100% or a smaller percentage), collaborations with LGBT+ associations and community members, tips to be a better ally and all-time contributions to the LGBT+ community.

Rainbow logos

Only six brands slapped a rainbow over their logos, such as Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Confections, Mercedes-Benz, Polo Club, and PUMA. The other 14 brands kept their original logos. Of the three components of the queer imagery typology, the rainbow logo is the less common among the brand's strategic communication to celebrate Pride and impart social change, with only 30% using the rainbow logo communication tool.

Pride collections

Offering the themed products is insufficient to be a purposeful brand. However, 60% of the brands launched a Pride collection to celebrate Pride, corresponding to 12 brands. That said, eight brands, or 40% of the total, didn't release a Pride collection or rainbow-themed products.

C&A launched the topmost collection, while the smallest one is from Harry's, with 47 items and one limited-edition Shave kit, respectively. These collections go from limited editions (Harry's and L'Oréal Paris) to one item (Polo Club) or dozens of products (C&A and Abercrombie & Fitch). Also, they might be available all year or in a short time.

Donations

9 in 20 brands didn't include donations in their 2021 Pride efforts. They are Control Portugal, C&A, Danone Portugal, Ikea, Mercedes-Benz, The Body Shop, and Patagonia. So, 45% of the brands under study have not come forward with a donation. Even though these brands didn't publicly communicate any donation during Pride month on Instagram and their website, this doesn't mean they haven't done it or don't do it throughout the year. However, that's not the scope of our study. We have different types of donations:

a) A defined amount independent of sales (e.g., Confections or Crate and Barrel);

b) Relocation of campaign budget (e.g., Happy Socks);

c) A percentage of sales (e.g., Havaianas);

d) 100% of sales prices (e.g., Polo Club); and

e) A percentage of the revenue with a maximum amount predefined (PUMA).

Partnerships (and donations)

From local to global partnerships and donations or direct exchanges, from a single third party to several ones, the approaches vary in form and timeline, with numerous possibilities to actively campaign for LGBT rights and acceptance:

a) Donate to one or several LGBT+ associations and non-governmental organizations (e.g., Crate and Barrel, L'Oréal Paris, PUMA, and Polo Club);

b) Support a Pride organization (e.g., Pantone);

c) Work with associations, non-governmental organizations, artists, influencers, activists, and advocates (e.g., Farfetch, Havaianas, Mercedes-Benz, The Body Shop and Harry's);

d) Co-create Pride collections (e.g., Abercrombie & Fitch);

e) Contribute to crisis support services for LGBT+ people (e.g., Levi's);

f) Donate to small diversity clubs (Confections); and

g) Choose local or international associations or non-governmental organizations (e.g., Havaianas, PUMA, and L'Oréal Paris).

The most common partnerships are celebrated with local or international associations through donations.

The selection of these partnerships can define the brand's message, positioning and LGBT+ causes. For instance, Abercrombie & Fitch, by selecting the Trevor Project as a partner, not

only for its donation but also to co-create the Pride campaign, is more focused on raising awareness and resources to help end suicide among LGBT+ young people.

<u>Pride hashtags</u>

Abercrombie & Fitch, Ikea, PUMA, and Patagonia are the only brands that didn't use Pride hashtags. The others used two key patterns:

a) Branded hashtags, including the brand name and the campaign slogan or message;

b) Statements converted into Pride hashtags, mixed with broad Pride hashtags.

Overview

The above results will allow us to understand the process of moving from allyship to brand activism, including the CRM programs proposed by Galan-Ladero (2013), which include elements such as type of donation, number of products, corporations and associations involved, duration, geographical scope, cause supported, the media used, and who pays the donation.

Table 12. X-ray of the 2021 Pride campaigns by the 20 selected brands

Brand	Campaign	Logo	Collection	Pride hashtags	Donation	Partnership
Control Portugal	No	No	No	#LGBT #orgulho #direitoslgbti	No	No
Abercrombie & Fitch	Celebrates news ways of coming together, supporting each other and celebrating Pride.	Yes	With the Trevor Project - 21 items.	No	$200,000 to the Trevor Project.	The Trevor Project, artists, and advocates.
C&A	Celebration of unity, diversity and equality, using fashion to address the equality rights of the LGBT community.	Yes	47 items.	#LGBTQIAplus UME #pride2021 #celebratingpride #inclusivitymatte r #pridemonth202 1	No.	Riccardo Simonetti Initiative
Levi's	Celebrating with moments of allyship for the LGBT+ community. Honor the first Pride: Stonewall Rebellion of 1969. Artist, activist Fresco Steez designed a limited-edition (20) Trucker Jacket.	No	Yes.	#LevisPride 2021 #LevisPride	OutRight International + Stonewall Community Foundation.	Two associations, artists, influencers.
Crate and Barrel	Home is for Everyone. No matter who you are, what you look like or who you love, home should be a place of comfort and acceptance - for all.	No	No	#HomeIsForEver yone #Pride #PrideMonth #Pride2021 #ItGetsBetter	$25,000 to It Gets Better Project and other organizations	It Gets Better and Lurie Children's Hospital's Potocsnak Family Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine.
Danone Portugal	No	No	No	#pridemonth #paratodos	No	No
Farfetch	The guest editors shared their heroes of queer	No	No	#Pride2021	We Exist,	BROWNS, Farfetch

					Glaad / and others = 10.	guest editors. artists and activists
	community who broke barriers. Each one chose a charity to FARFETCH donate.					
Happy Socks	Walk with Pride, Shop Pride Socks. InterPride also received 10% of profits from pieces in the Pride collection sold during the year.	No	Yes	#HappinessEverywhere #gaypride #AlwaysWalkWithPride #pride #lgbt #lgbtq #loveislove #love #pride365 #queer #lovewins #rainbow #lgbtpride	100% of campaign budget to InterPride.	InterPride and queer creatives.
Harrys	Shave With Pride. 100% of profits from Shave with Pride to The Trevor Project + £10 from purchased set and razor to the Albert Kennedy Trust.	No	Yes. Limited-edition.	#ShaveWithPride #StrideWithPride Harrys #Pride	The Trevor Project and the Albert Kennedy Trust	The Trevor Project, Albert Kennedy Trust, Zipeng Zhu, and Jamie Windust.
Havaianas	All love welcome. Over 2.4 million of reais raised through Pride collection since the brand started the collaboration.	No	Yes	#EmpatiaGeraEmpatia #Pride #TodoAmorÉBemVindo #PrideMonth #HavaianasPride	7% of sales to All Out.	ALL Out, Raquel das Baías and Ana Gabriela, Ariel Nobre and Paulette Pink
Ikea	Everyone feels at home	No	Not found	No	Not found	Not found
Confections	Spontaneous campaign originated by a backlash rooted on an Instagram post with the rainbow flag heart shaped cookies.	Yes	Yes	#love #pride	$250 - Lufkin high school diversity club.	No
Lego	Everyone is Awesome	No	Yes	#LGBTQIA #Pride #PrideMonth	No	Workplace Pride + Stonewall + Open for Business

L'Oréal Paris	Pride for All. Essie, NYX, L'Oréal Paris, Maybelline NY collaborated to give a donation trough the sales of the collection.	No	Limited-ed. Pride for All beauty.	#Pride2021 #Pride	$100,000. to Ali Forney Center.	Ali Forney Center, NYC Pride
Mercedes-Benz	Safe Spaces.	Yes	No	#pridemonth #daimlerpride	No	Athlete Ally and Leo Baker
Pantone	New Pantone Pride Espresso Cup Set supports the WorldPride EuroGames + Corporate Equality Index.	No	Yes 5 items	#pride	No	WorldPride, Malmö, and EuroGames Copenhagen
Polo Club	Love In All its Forms. Unisex Pride t-shirt.	Yes	Yes – 1 item	#pridemonth #loveinallitsforms #pride21	100% of sales price to Diversitat.	Diversitat.
PUMA	Forever Free. 20% of the revenue from sales of the collection went to Cara Delevingne Foundation, a project of the Giving Back Fund.	Yes	Yes – 11 items	No	$500,000 maximum	Cara Delevingne and Cara Delevingne Foundation.
The Body Shop	"We want to break the silence on LGBTQ+ issues. Find out how you can join us in becoming a better ally.".	No	No	#Pride #SelfLove #Pride2021 #PrideMonth	No.	MindOut LGBTQ Mental Health Service
Patagonia	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

The circuit's winners and losers

Polo Club is the only brand with a strike in the six elements of the 2021 Pride campaign X-ray. On the opposite side, with zero matches, only one brand: Patagonia. Then, we have three brands with one fit: Control Portugal, Danone Portugal and Ikea. Both Control Portugal and Danone Portugal have Pride hashtags. Ikea has a rainbow-themed campaign. The Body Shop is the only brand with three fits, followed by five brands with four fits, corresponding to 25% of the brands, such as Crate and Barrel, Farfetch, Lego, Mercedes-Benz and Pantone. The podium is closed with 45% of the brands, having five fits, namely C&A, Abercrombie & Fitch, Levi's, Happy Socks, Harry's, Havaianas, Confections, L'Oréal, and PUMA.

Campaign profile overview

30% of the 2021 Pride campaigns have internal speakers helping to spread the message (see Table 13). Internal support is one of the 360º formulae for brands to join the conversation, alongside charity, dialogue about the multi-experience of Queerness, celebrate Pride all year, encourage change and be purpose-driven. These internal speakers reinforce the brand messaging and may facilitate the establishment of shared meaning with the audience. Control Portugal, C&A, and Lego are some of the brands included in the other 70%, or 14 brands.

Levi's, for instance, launched the Tailor Profile Series in conjunction with Pride Month. For this first instalment, Michael Glassmacher is the star. The New York-based Tailor is a member of the LGBT+ community and has over eight years working at the company, giving the following testimonial: "Levi's has done the hard work and risked business to stand in solidarity with us and has done so since the beginning." More examples:

a) Crate and Barrell shared personal stories from their community.

b) Farfetch guest editors have chosen a charity close to their hearts that FARFETCH donated to on their behalf.

c) L'Oréal Paris introduced its proud family members (e.g., Leyna Bloom, an activist, dancer, and member of the L'Oréal US League team; or Sir John, L'Oréal Paris US Makeup Artist and Creative Director, and member of the LGBTQIA+ community).

d) Pantone highlights its 100% score on the corporate equality index given by the Human Rights Campaign and the fact of being considered one of the best places to work for the LGBTQ+ community.

e) PUMA highlights diversity and inclusion as core parts of its culture, encouraging the employees to be their authentic selves.

On the total posts on Instagram about Pride Month, from 1 to 30 June, Ikea is the only brand with zero publications, an exception already explained above. With ten or fewer posts, are the following brands: Control Portugal, C&A, Crate and Barrel, Danone Portugal, Farfetch, Happy Socks, Lego, L'Oréal Paris, Mercedes-Benz, Polo Club, PUMA, and Patagonia (N=13). From 11 to 20 posts, we have Levi's, Havaianas, Confections, Pantone, and The Body Shop (N=5). And from 21 to 30 or more, we have Abercrombie & Fitch and Harry's (N=2).

Table 13 also gives more details about the rainbow-themed campaign of each brand. To explore more about the brands, explore Appendix 5.

Table 13. 2021 campaign profile

Brand	Rainbow-themed campaign	Internal speakers	Total posts
Control Portugal	No	No	1
Abercrombie & Fitch	Yes. Celebrate LGBTQI+ diversity	No	33
C&A	Yes. LGBTQIA+U+ME campaign	No	8
Levi's	Yes. All pronouns. All LOVE. To use someone's pronouns is to see how they move through the world.	Yes	19
Crate and Barrel	Yes. Home is for Everyone. Lurie Children's Hospital's Potocsnak Family Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine shared conversation starters about Pride for families, how to celebrate and to be an ally all year.	Yes	2
Danone Portugal	No.	No	1
Farfetch	Yes.	Yes	9
Happy Socks	Yes	No	8
Harrys	Yes. Shave With Pride	No	21
Havaianas	Yes. All love welcome	No	13

Ikea	Yes. Everyone feels at home	No	0
Confections	Yes	No	11
Lego	Yes. Everyone is Awesome	No	1
L'Oréal Paris	Yes. Pride for All. Celebration of self-worth. Launch of Pride conversations, a two-day Instagram live takeover with engaged members of the LGBTQIA+ community to inspire, engage, and celebrate the community.	Yes	7
Mercedes-Benz	Yes. Mercedes-Benz and Athlete Ally partnered up to create Safe Spaces. Also partnered with Leo Baker, a skater part of the Trans community.	No	10
Pantone	Yes. Silver Corporate Partner Human Rights Campaign - 100% score on the corporate equality index, one of the best places to work for LGBT+ community.	Yes	19
Polo Club	Yes. Polo Club is proud to celebrate love in all its forms. Feel free to be yourself because this is what makes you unique and special.	No	2
PUMA	Yes. Forever Free: collaboration of PUMA and LGBT+ activist Cara Delevingne. The second capsule collection to celebrate Pride Month to inspire others to be free from fear and believe in themselves. A celebration of Pride and an homage to the strength of the community, specifically in regard to the mental health hurdles that the LGBTQIA+ community has faced.	Yes	1
The Body Shop	Yes. "This Pride, we want our actions to match our promises. We're working with MindOut LGBTQ Mental Health Service, a charity we've partnered with since 2019. Vital services like MindOut need donations more than ever so they can continue to support individuals across the world. If you can donate, head to the link in our bio.".	No	16
Patagonia	No. "With humility and in recognition of our shortcomings, we celebrate Pride and the right for each of us, including members of the LGBTQ+ community, to live a life of dignity and authenticity. We will raise our voice as advocates and will protest laws that discriminate against LGBTQ+ individuals and sow hate and division within society. We will work toward equality in our company and the places and communities where we work, so that we can all live proudly and openly as we are.".	No	1

5.1.2 Sample profile: 2022 Pride campaign

Table 14 summarizes the 2022 Pride campaigns designed and launched by the 20 selected brands. Following our results in 2021, Ikea continued as the only brand without rainbow publications on Instagram during the 2022 Pride Month period.

Rainbow-themed campaigns

Control Portugal, Crate and Barrel, Danone Portugal, Ikea, Polo Club, and Patagonia (N=6) didn't launch a rainbow-marketing campaign for Pride Month 2022. Polo Club and Patagonia are the new members of this group that are not marketing the rainbow, with an increase of 67% compared with last year (excluding Ikea). So, the two brands decided not to continue their Pride marketing efforts or at least to interrupt the communication of it. Launching a rainbow-themed campaign defines the next communication steps, from slapping a rainbow in the logo to creating Pride merchandise and collaborating with the community. Analysing Table 14, we identified patterns in how these brands share and tell their stories. We highlight the following ones:

1. All brands launched new rainbow-themed campaigns with one exception: Pantone. It is the only brand which uses the same storytelling and content of 2021.

2. 'Pride' or 'Orgulho' are words widely used to spread the message and associate the brand with the targeted audience's values. For instance, "Always Walk with Pride" (Happy Socks), "Cookie Kits celebrating Pride", and "Work in Pride Charter" (The Body Shop).

3. Focus on the togetherness, love, celebration, visibility and authenticity sides of Pride and Pride Month, allowing brands to share inspiring stories, call-to-actions, and positionings. E.g., "From PUMA with Love" (PUMA), "To make sure that everyone can be seen and heard in their most authentic light whilst" (The Body Shop), "Everyone Different. All Equal" (Mercedes-Benz), "We Belong Together" (Abercrombie & Fitch), "We promise to share our Always Walk with Pride platform and provide more space for queer visibility beyond the Pride season" (Happy Socks), "Share the channel with employees and friends so they can tell their inspiring stories" (L'Oréal Paris), and "Love Transforms" (Levi's). Lack of use of more actionable words with resistance and combative spirit as allyship,

advocacy, and activism. There are a few exceptions, namely: "Celebrate LGBT+ Activism" (Levi's), "We believe that being an ally to the LGBT+ community is not something that can be switched on and off when suitable" (Happy Socks), and "LBGT+ Employee advocacy groups did activities for employees, such as Drag Queen Story Time" (Lego).

4. Brands commonly prefer vague messaging instead of showing what they are actively doing to help the LGBT+ community or promoting revolutionary thinking. The tendency of brands actively campaigning for LGBT rights finds echoes in messages related to using the brand's channels to provide more space for queer visibility (Happy Socks and L'Oréal Paris), join Pride events and promote internal activities throughout LGBT+ employee advocacy groups (Lego), or make the promise that the brand will walk the talk all year and not only during Pride Month (Happy Socks).

Rainbow logos

Compared to 2021, we found (again) six brands slapping a rainbow over their logos. These brands are the same as last year: Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Confections, Mercedes-Benz, Polo Club, and PUMA. The other 14 brands kept their original logos. In the case of Polo Club, it was the only public Pride marketing move, as it didn't merchandise the rainbow as it did in 2021.

The first brand to change its logo was Abercrombie & Fitch on May 19. C&A also changed it in May, but a few days later, on May 26. The beginning of June is the most popular time to change the logo for Pride Month festivities, with Confections, Mercedes-Benz, and PUMA doing it. Polo Club only updated it on June 17. All brands returned to their original logos in July, with two exceptions: C&A (only updated at the beginning of August) and Confections (which we couldn't track when it updated its logo).

Pride collections

Eleven brands launched, relaunched or repurposed products to promote a rainbow-theme collection. It is one less brand compared to 2021. The repeaters are Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Happy Socks, Harry's, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, Pantone, and PUMA. Farfetch is the only new name in this cluster. L'Oréal Paris and Polo Club left the group.

Abercrombie is the only brand with a co-created collection, a collaboration with The Trevor Project. C&A has the ultimate collection, with 70 items. Havaianas has a 34 items Pride collection, but only two new products. Levi's has a 20-item collection, followed by Confections with 17 products. PUMA collection has 19 items, and Happy Socks merchandise includes 16 items (in collaboration with the Phluid Phoundation). Pantone recovers the 2021 merchandise, while Lego launches the A-Z awesome, a colourful alphabet of identities built from Lego bricks created by their LGBT+ community.

Donations

Donations and partnerships came intrinsically connected to rainbow-themed campaigns and collections. Only Pantone merchandise doesn't have a reference to a donation commitment. All donations are in the form of financial support. Types of donations:

a) The donation amount is independent of the collection sales and revenue, being pre-established. E.g., Happy Socks.

b) The donations are communicated within the Pride campaign but are not Pride-Month limited and Pride-collection limited. E.g., Levi's and Lego.

c) The 100% of profits with the Pride products are donated. E.g., Harrys and C&A.

d) Part of the sales profits of Pride products are donated, E.g., Havaianas and Confections.

e) Part of the sales profits of the Pride products is donated, with a predefined maximum ceiling. E.g., PUMA.

Who pays the donations?

The ten brands donating have different types of donations, generating distinct answers to this question. There is no promotion of direct donations from consumers to an association. To have a proper framework, we would need to have more information, but generically, we have the following options: (a) the brand autonomously defines the amount of money; and (b) the financial donation depends on the number of sales or revenue.

Partnerships (and donations)

Eight brands didn't communicate and celebrate any partnership, while twelve brands included this option in their purpose-driven campaign during Pride Month.

Considering the brands which celebrated partnerships and collaborations (Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Farfetch, Happy Socks, Harry's, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, L'Oréal Paris, PUMA, and The Body Shop), we have grouped that in the following categories, as they can combine the several types of partnerships presented:

a) Pride organizations and foundations. E.g., Pride Amsterdam and InterPride (e.g., C&A and Happy Socks).

b) A non-governmental organization with a local or regional scope. E.g., Larkin Street Youth Services (Levi's) and Equality Texas (Confections).

c) A non-governmental organization with a national reach. E.g., The Trevor Project (Abercrombie & Fitch and Harrys), All Out Brazil (Havaianas), and GLAAD (PUMA).

d) Organizations to promote the human rights of LGBT+ people worldwide. E.g., OutRight Action International (Levi's).

e) International associations or foundations that support the LGBT+ community directly or through other organizations at a global and grassroots level. E.g., Phluid Phoundation (Happy Socks), Stonewall (Lego), and Cara Delevingne Foundation (PUMA).

f) Worldwide networks for LGBT+ young people and students or with other specific causes. E.g., IGLYO (C&A).

g) Organizations and not-for-profit foundations dedicated to LGBT+ acceptance and belonging in the workplace, with a national or international reach. E.g., Workplace Pride (Lego).

h) Coalitions of global companies dedicated to LGBT+ inclusion. E.g., Open for Business (Lego).

i) LGBT+ activists and ambassadors (e.g., C&A and Happy Socks).

j) LGBT+ community leaders (e.g., Levi's).

k) Local or international LGBT+ artists, photographers, influencers, designers, misses, athletes, and content creators (e.g., Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A).

l) Press partners. E.g., Interview Magazine (Farfetch).

m) Brands from the same enterprise group or not. E.g., Flamingo and Fossil (Harrys).

n) The brand community, from fans to employees, families, and consumers. E.g., Lego and L'Oréal Paris.

<u>Pride hashtags</u>

Thirteen brands used Pride hashtags. Six missed this point (Patagonia, Polo Club, Ikea, Danone Portugal, Crate and Barrel, Levi's, and C&A). In 2021, only four didn't use Pride hashtags. The two patterns identified in the 2021 Pride campaign remain.

Table 14. X-ray of the 2022 Pride campaigns by the 20 selected brands

Brand	Campaign	Logo	Collection	Pride hashtags	Donation	Partnership
Control Portugal	No	No	No	#lgbtqiaplus	No	No
Abercrombie & Fitch	We Belong Together. Celebrate with the ones who make you feel loved and validated, near and far.	19 May-2 July.	Created with The Trevor Project. 22 items.	#Pride #TrevorLoveChain	$400,000 USD to The Trevor Project.	Trevor Project, 5 photographers: NY, Berlin, London, Paris and Toronto.
C&A	#TogetherWeShine. Designed for the love of diversity.	26 May-9 August.	70 items.	No	An amount equal to the profits of the collection was donated to the IGLYO.	IGLYO, network, activists, influencers, Miss Belgium 2016, Pride Amsterdam Foundation.
Levi's	Love Transforms. Change continues with you. The voice you use. The way you dress. Your very existence. Celebrate LGBT+ activism.	No	20 items.	No	Annual $100,000 to OutRight Action International.	OutRight Action International, queer artists, leaders in the community, Larkin Street Youth Services, Q Youth Foundation.
Crate and Barrel	No	No	No	No	No	No
Danone Portugal	No	No	No	No	No	No
Farfetch	Partners of Interview mag to highlight a community of next-generation pioneers, starring Fin and Zion, dressed in the best from Farfetch's queer designers.	No	Yes	#Pride	Interview made a donation to Tabboo chosen charity, Hetrick-Martin Institute.	Interview Mag, Zion Moreno, Fin Argus, Violet Chachki, Gabe Morales and Peter Ilic, Michael Cuby.
Happy Socks	Always walk with Pride.	No	Yes. 16 items.	#AlwaysWalkWi	10% of net sales of Pride	InterPride, Phluid

	Paired up with InterPride. "We believe that being an ally to the LGBT+ community is not something that can be switched-on-and-off when suitable. That's why we promise to share our Always Walk with Pride platform and provide more space for queer visibility beyond the Pride season.".			thPride #HappySocksPride #CSDBerlin #BerlinPride #Pride #PrideMonth #LGBTQIA #NYCPride #AgeofAquaria #PhluidProject	socks sold during the year donated to InterPride. + US: 10% of profits from the Happy Socks x Phluid products sold in 2022 donated to Phluid Phoundation.	Phoundation, activists, artists and influencers.
Harrys	Wherever you shave, shave with pride.	No	Yes. Face & Body Shave Set.	#Pride	100% of profits with the Pride set donated to The Trevor Project	The Trevor Project, Flamingo, Arta Gee, UGG, OPI and Fossil.
Havaianas	Orgulho de caminhar com você.	No	34 items. 2 are new.	#MomentoHavalover	7% do lucro das vendas doado a All Out.	All Out Brasil and Instituto DataFolha
Ikea	No	No	No	No	No	No
Confections	Cookie kits celebrating Pride	1 June- unknown.	Yes. 17 items.	#equalrights #pride #lgbtq #loveislove #rainbow	Profits donated to Equality Texas	Equality Texas.
Lego	A-Z of Awesome. Invited LGBT+ families to bring their identity to life through self-expression. Joined Pride events. LBGT+ Employee groups activities.	No	Yes	#AtoZofAwesome #LGBTQIA	$1 million to LGBTQ partners. Collaborating with international festivities, advocacy and educational organizations.	Examples: Workplace Pride, Open for Business, and Stonewall.
L'Oréal Paris	#AllLoveIsWorthIt - share the channel with employees and friends so they can tell their inspiring stories. Goal:	No	No	#AllLoveIsWorthIt #Pride2022	No	"It is about amplifying difficult journeys that happened and

	helping to make sure that these important points of view are heard.					continue to happen, reminding people that regardless of your journey, you are loved" (Visna).
Mercedes-Benz	Everyone different. All equal.	1 June-4 July.	No	#PrideMonth #MercedesBenzPride	No	No
Pantone	Using the same content of 2021.	No	Yes. The same of 2021.	#rainbow #pride #pridemonth	No.	No.
Polo Club	No.	17 June-12 July.	No.	No	No.	No.
PUMA	From PUMA with Love.	Yes. 02 June to 18 July.	19 items.	#TogetherForever	20% of profits in a maximum of $250,000 from the collection sales to the Cara Delevingne Foundation	Cara Delevingne Foundation to benefit GLAAD.
The Body Shop	Work in Pride Charter to support LGBT employees. Goal: to make sure everyone can be seen and heard in their most authentic light whilst.	No	No	#PrideMonth #Pride2022 #SelfLove #Pride	No	Deni Todorovi, thefashionhackr, SØREN and Rich Watkins.
Patagonia	No	No	No	No	No	No

With zero fits regarding the six elements under consideration (rainbow-themed campaign, logo, collection, pride hashtags, donation, and partnerships), we have Patagonia, Ikea, Danone Portugal, and Crate and Barrel (N=4 or 20% of the total). Last year we only had one brand (Patagonia). The six elements podium features Abercrombie & Fitch, Confections, and PUMA (N=3). So, from 2021 to 2022, we moved from only one brand on the podium to three brands. However, last year's champion, Polo Club, is now in the one-element classification with the rainbow logo (alongside the Control Portugal brand, only with Pride hashtags, equivalent to 10% of the total).

Then, with five elements, we have C&A, Farfetch, Happy Socks, Harrys, Havaianas, and Lego (N= 6 or 30% of the total). With four elements, we only have Levi's. The tree elements group has L'Oréal Paris, Mercedes-Benz, Pantone, and The Body Shop.

Analysing the most popular element and the less popular, here is the distribution from the most commonly used to the less one: campaign (N=14, used 70% of the time), Pride hashtags (N=13, used 65% of the time), partnerships (N=12, used 60& of the time), collection (N=11, used 55% of the time), donation (N=10, used 50% of the time), and logo (N=6, used 30% of the time).

Campaign profile overview

30% of the 2022 pride campaigns (N=6) have internal speakers helping to spread the message (see Table 15), the same percentage as in 2021. Some are new, like C&A, Abercrombie & Fitch, and The Body Shop, and some are repeaters, like Farfetch and L'Oréal Paris. For instance, Farfetch employees are responsible for choosing their favourite icons, and Lego employees are encouraged to contribute to creating the community-centred social media project A-Z of Awesome. On the total posts on Instagram about Pride Month, with ten or fewer posts, are the following brands: Control Portugal, C&A, Crate and Barrel, Danone Portugal, Havaianas, Ikea, Confections, Lego, Mercedes-Benz, Polo Club, Patagonia, PUMA, Pantone, and The Body Shop (N=14). From 11 to 20 posts, we have Levi's, Farfetch, Happy Socks, and L'Oréal Paris (N=4). And from 21 to 30 or more, we have Abercrombie & Fitch and Harry's (N=2). Table 15 provides information about the rainbow-themed campaign of each brand. Explore more about the brands at Appendix 5.

Table 15. 2022 campaign profile

Brand	Rainbow-themed campaign	Internal speakers	Total posts
Control Portugal	No	No	1
Abercrombie & Fitch	5 photographers across the globe shared how they celebrate Pride with their community.	Yes	22
C&A	PRIDE Collection encourages all people: "Wear what you feel comfortable in and express your personality.". Allyship means actively contributing to a culture of equity and inclusion. An ally knows that their position, or simply having the advantage of being a bystander, means they can change things.	Yes	9
Levi's	While these ultra-comfy sweatshirts feel great and go with just about anything, they carry an important message: Equality never goes out of style. Love transforms: celebrate the LGBTQ+ community with an all-new collection centred around love.	No	12
Crate and Barrel	No	No	0
Danone Portugal	No	No	0
Farfetch	Argus and Zion Moreno journey to self-discovery, representation, and what Pride means to them. Farfetch employees chose Cher as their favourite fashion icon. Explore our curated Cher-inspired edit, capturing the pop star's iconic flamboyant style over the decades, including a pre-owned #ChristianDior logo necklace and #GentleMonsterxHBA gradient sunglasses.	Yes	13
Happy Socks	Rainbow-colours styles to help customers find the stride they can walk with Pride. Dots strike back in LGBT+ flag colours. The classic Pride Stripe Sock has gotten a makeover, inspired by the Progress Pride Flag design by Daniel Quasar. Also, the Pride Rainbow Sock – a mismatched pair in glitter. Always Walk with Pride is a platform to amplify queer voices. Met with activists, artists and influencers to hear their stories.	No	14
Harrys	Meet the artist behind the Face and Body Shave Set packaging: Ohni Lisle. Inspired by "faces, bodies, and campiness," the illustrator's playful style is a perfect match for Pride. "If I wake up one day and I'm like, 'All right, I want it off,' then I take it off. So that's when I feel truest is when I wake up and I decide what I want to do with my own	No	21

	body." - Arta (she/they).		
Havaianas	Linha Havaianas Pride.7% do valor líquido das vendas para a All Out Brasil. Reconhece que, como uma empresa aliada, tem a responsabilidade de ajudar a preencher as lacunas de informações que ainda existem no Brasil. Para ter um retrato mais plural e profundo sobre a comunidade, está fazendo a Pesquisa do Orgulho em parceria com All Out Brasil e o instituto DataFolha.	No	9
Ikea	No	No	0
Confections	Recalls the 2021 backlash. Cookie kits celebrating PRIDE. All profits donated to Equality Texas. 17 items: 3 cookie kits, 8 shirts, 2 tote bags, 2 water bottles, 2 mugs.	No	8
Lego	A-Z of Awesome: community-centred social media project that invited members of the LGBT+ community to share their stories. $1 million donation to LGBT+ partners and collaboration with international festivities, advocacy and educational organizations like Workplace Pride and Stonewall. Campaign, which runs into 2023, calls to raise awareness of the identities and stories in those communities. Celebrate inclusivity and embrace self-expression in the LGBT+ community. The designs of each letter were and will be created by members of the LGBT+ community, including LEGO fans, employees, and community members.	Yes	6
L'Oréal Paris	Communicate the commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, namely the role has one of the sponsors of the LGBTI Standards of Conduct for Business established by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights since 2018.	Yes	14
Mercedes-Benz	During Pride 2022 and beyond Mercedes told global stories of safe transport for the LGBTQIA+ community, driving awareness around the importance of this cause and minting new allies. Created image and video content featuring InReach shared on Mercedes' global channels.	No	9
Pantone	Not applicable.	No	10
Polo Club	Not found.	No	0
PUMA	"With rainbow designs and graphics inspired by love and unity, this gear was made to be worn with pride (…). No matter where you are or how you choose to celebrate this year, we'll be right there with you.". Supporting Cara Delevingne, and Carra Sykes, PUMA's "Together Forever" campaign is fronted by a cast that represents the diversity of the LGBT+ community, including Brinda Iyer, Matt Bernstein, and Yassa Almokhamad; shot by LaQuann	No	2

	Dawson. Pride is a celebration, recognizing over half a century of purposeful strides toward equity and community.		
The Body Shop	We know that where people feel able to be themselves, they feel and perform better. Where people can be their authentic selves, they are more likely to raise their voices and to participate in the important conversations that lead to long term and needed, positive societal change. "My identity transcends employment, and my skills and talent transcend my personal identity." - Keane Spenle, Marketing Assistant at The Body Shop	Yes	3
Patagonia	No	No	0

5.1.3   Pride campaigns 2021: Typology development and descriptive codification

Table 16 summarizes the eight typology categories developed during this research and applied to the 2021 Pride campaigns under analysis. Considering the efforts to evolve from the allyship status to the activism mode, our code structure includes all main categories defined to join the LGBT conversation during Pride Month in several approaches and perspectives. From here, it is possible to understand patterns, gaps, opportunities and threats in a descriptive codification with a deep qualitative lens. Thus, the Table 16 is an overview based on eight branches (LGBT fact, Queer Imagery, Product orientation, Time-space, Internal support, collabs and partnerships, community engagement, and vague messaging) and through the descriptive codification, each 2021 Pride campaign is explored following these typologies. Table 16 allows us to delve into the data from Table 14 and provide more insights for the discussion chapter.

LGBT facts

Five brands utilise LGBT facts to celebrate and mark LGBT+ Pride Month. They are Levi's, Crate and Barrel, Farfetch, Happy Socks, and The Body Shop. Together, these brands correspond to 25% of the total. Here are the different approaches:

a)   History: Honour the first Pride: The Stonewall Rebellion of 1969. - Levi's.

b)   Share the story of one of the most popular Queer symbols worldwide: the Pride Flag. "In 1977, Harvey Milk challenged Gilbert Baker to come up with a symbol of pride for the gay community. The Pride Flag, inspired by Judy Garland's "Over the

Rainbow," flew at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade celebration on June 25, 1978." - Crate and Barrel.

c) Newsworthy facts: 'Near the end of 2020, the world watched Nigerian youth collectively bear their anger and shout together: "END SARS",' recalls artist Ebun Sodipo.' - Farfetch.

d) The objections and threats the LGBT+ community still faces: "In 68 countries, homosexuality is considered a crime." – Happy Socks

Queer imagery

The performative use of queer imagery refers to applying the rainbow or Pride flag in one or more items, from logos to collections and campaigns.

Danone Portugal, Farfetch and Ikea are the only brands without queer imagery during 2021 Pride month messaging. Consequently, 85% of brands use the rainbow or Pride flag to communicate their Pride marketing efforts, from slapping a rainbow into their logos to launching Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns.

Queer imagery is among the most popular typologies, with 85% of brands using it, the same as community engagement typology. Only vague messaging typology collects more brands, with 18 (= 90%). Outside the podium, we have collaborations (collabs) and partnerships (N=15, 75% of the total), product orientation (N=11, 55%), time-space (N=10, 50%), and internal support (N=7, 35%).

Product orientation

Thirteen brands have Pride campaigns with product orientation. In other words, this means that 65% of the total promoted rainbow-themed merchandising, from new collections to repurposed products. Those brands with product orientation are Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Happy Socks, Harrys, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, L'Oréal Paris, Mercedes-Benz, Pantone, Polo Club, and PUMA.

Many of these products have a storytelling orientation, highlighting the tangible exchange between brands and their targeted audiences. Therefore, the product orientation typology might contribute to the pragmatic legitimacy of brands as they are on the frontline of moving the marketing world into a brand activism framework. This tangible reciprocity is

also the starting point for financial (donations) and intangible exchanges (advocacy groups).

To the reedition approach, we highlight Abercrombie & Fitch's 'Fierce Pride Edition', "the same iconic scent, now in a redesigned bottle that celebrates love".

There is a pattern of using the products as a tangible tool to achieve an aspirational purpose, always related to inspirational rainbow-themed campaigns. Then this pattern has different approaches:

a) C&A launched the LGBTQIA+U+ME collection for everyone to let their consumers 'personality shine'.

b) Levi's follows this aspirational content under the slogan 'Respect all pronouns' because to use someone's pronouns is to see how they move through the world'.

c) Happy Socks highlights their all-year collection, with 10% of the profits from all Pride products in their always-on collection sold throughout the year going to InterPride.

d) These Pride collections and rainbow-themed merchandise are usually full of queer symbols. As Harrys explains, for example: "Each set includes a limited-edition Harrys razor with a unique, iridescent, rainbowed finish, designed to be a true positive reflection of Pride".

e) The product is also a tool to promote engagement with the community. E.g., "Qual seu item preferido da nossa coleção?".

f) Mercedes-Benz does something from the other brands with a product orientation. Drawing from the rainbow-themed campaign, promote specific items available throughout the year but with a queerer inspiration. The brand message communicates the product characteristics: "@mercedeseq [EQA 250 | Stromverbrauch kombiniert 15,7 kWh/100 km | CO_2-Emission kombiniert: 0 g/km | mb4.me/DAT-Leitfaden-electric | mb4.me/WLTP_HQ]".

The inspirational and motivational coin of the product orientation has a more commercialised side of the Pride collections, with call-to-actions such as Shop the link in our bio (Levi's), Get yours online now at www.poloclub.com (Polo Club), Shopping our

products (Happy Socks), and Forever Free collection is available on online and in @puma_nyc (PUMA).

<u>Time-Space</u>

Ten brands actively campaign for LGBT rights while communicating their commitment over time. The Body Shop, PUMA, Pantone, Mercedes-Benz, L'Oréal Paris, Havaianas, Harrys, Happy Socks, Levi's, and Abercrombie & Fitch show that their support is not only during Pride Month but expanded over time, reinforcing their intrinsic motivations.

Abercrombie & Fitch, for instance, explores the brand heritage and reputation, stating that the collaboration with the Trevor Project has been over one decade. Levi's follows this messaging but with more details, also exploring how they help the LGBT community: "Levi's makes an annual donation to OutRight Action International, working to advance human rights for LGBTQIA+ people all over the world". The Body Shop also follows this long-term commitment through its work with associations and non-governmental organizations, highlighting the collaborations with MindOut since 2019.

Happy Socks goes for an implicit message of supporting Pride 365 days by stating its commitment to contribute to real change in the world. The first step, which means it will have more to achieve this goal, is to update the Pride sock design to a more inclusive one.

Harrys declares they are proud to support the LGBT+ community all year round. The goal is to look and sound genuine and authentic. Therefore, brands must be more concrete in this support of Pride and LGBT+ rights and acceptance 365 days occurs. Aligned with this positioning is Havaianas.

L'Oréal Paris claims its credits as a supporter of UN Free & Equal standards of conduct for business, aiming to tackle discrimination against the LGBT+ community. This claim relates the support of these standards with the company values. Long-term commitments allow the creation and communication of purpose-driven campaigns with stakeholders already waiting for this behaviour from the brand. Mercedes-Benz, PUMA, and Pantone align with this positioning. It is visible in the other brands fitting this typology.

<u>Internal Support</u>

Internal support is the fifth typology developed in the code structure of this research. How are brands communicating this support from the inside out?

PUMA states that diversity and inclusion are a core part of PUMA's culture, declaring that it encourages all of its employees to be their authentic selves. Mercedes-Benz's brand goes with the approach, highlighting values such as openness and fairness, and it also shares its sponsorship of local community events and employee volunteerism activities.

Pantone uses its 100% score as one of the best places to work for the LGBT+ community and the role as Silver Corporate Partner at Human Rights Campaign. L'Oréal Paris has the same strategy, communicating its support to UN Free & Equal standards of conduct for business, where internal support has an undeniable role. This beauty brand shares inspiring stories from LGBT+ employees, such as its global makeup director.

The Farfetch campaign is structured on internal support, giving the spotlight to its guest editors. Crate and Barrel shares personal stories from its community. Levi's shares inspiring stories from its employees, such as Michael Glassmachers.

Collaborations and Partnerships

There is a tendency to highlight the collaborations and partnerships with LGBT+ voices and actors, which can go from the co-creation of collections to donations, sponsorships, internal activities, employee voluntarism, giving visibility and space to share personal stories, joining a campaign cast, or dialogue with the community. Fifteen in twenty brands promote, celebrate and share their collaborations and partnerships. This typology has an inter-complementary connection to the community engagement typology. What are the collaborations and partnership types celebrated by the brands?

a) Donations to associations and non-governmental organisations. E.g., Levi's, Havaianas, Confections, Polo Club, PUMA and Harrys.

b) Visibility, reputation, and resources. E.g., Crate and Barrel.

c) Testimonials. E.g., Farfetch.

d) Multichannel and flexible partnerships, which include donations but not only. E.g., Happy Socks and L'Oréal Paris.

e) Open calls to mobilise the community to join a project, challenge, journey or goal. E.g., Lego and The Body Shop.

Community Engagement

Seventeen brands engage with the community during Pride Month through their rainbow-themed campaigns. It is one of the typologies with the best performance, maybe boosted by its flexibility. Celebrating collaborations and partnerships acts as a catapult to engage with the community. Only Control Portugal, Danone Portugal, and Ikea are out. In general terms, there is one pattern: use LGBT+ voices to spread a message. It is a wide vessel as it can include associations, artists, celebrities, anonymous, and others.

a) Abercrombie & Fitch is the brand that straights the use of these LGBT+ voices, using the exact words. Happy Socks follows this approach by asking queer creatives to share their Always Walk with Pride. Harrys shares the voice of Jamie Windust (author, broadcaster, model and contributing editor). L'Oréal Paris launched the Pride Conversations, a two-day Instagram live takeover with members of the LGBT+ community to inspire, engage, and celebrate their community.

b) C&A works with LGBT+ artists and the Ricardo Simonetti Association.

c) Levi's rainbow-themed campaign cast features LGBT+ participants and celebrities such as Brandon Flynn.

d) Crate and Barrel shares stories of its community and tries to mobilise it to share their stories and comments. Lego follows the same strategy, with an open call to Lego fans to build something that shows what Pride means to them, so then they share the highlights on their social media.

e) Farfetch highlights Pride pioneers.

f) Havaianas highlights the work of its partner, the All-Out Association.

g) Confections speak directly to their community.

h) Mercedes-Bens partnered up with Athlete Ally to create safe spaces.

i) Puma hosted Pride events and initiatives to raise awareness for LGBT issues.

j) The Body Shop assumes an educator role by teaching their community to be better allies to their LGBT+ community.

k) Patagonia states an activist role to protest laws that discriminate LGBT individuals.

As already done above, we must note that despite not being included in the community engagement typology for 2021 Pride campaigns, this does not mean that brands like Control Portugal, Danone Portugal, and Ikea does not engage with the LGBT+ community during the Pride Month or throughout the other eleven months of the year.

<u>Vague Messaging</u>

As it is related to the lack of tangible practices and the eventual use of messages regarding LGBT issues, vague messaging is a symbolic strategy (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990) able to provide ceremonial conformity with societal expectations without giving tangible practices that are visible. Many times, the mission is to create compelling storytelling without story actions. However, vague messaging does not imply that brands are in this performative allyship and activism, but rather that they give emotional rhetoric, which may be or not supported by concrete actions. Almost all brands give compelling storytelling, except Ikea and Farfetch. Ikea is the exception, without the Pride marketing campaign externally communicated on the channels under analysis. Farfetch adopts a more objective approach.

Patagonia commemorated Pride through activism, allyship and love. But there is a lack of explaining more concretely what this activism, allyship, and love means. The Body Shop dives into making positive change, one of the pillars of brand activism, highlighting the importance of listening to different stories and experiences.

Pantone uses emojis: one rainbow, one cloud, and one star. PUMA asks their community to "be proud". Polo Club explores this message with an appeal: "Feel free to be yourself because this is what makes you unique and special." These messages are contextualised with more information. Indeed, most of them with substantive management and strategies.

Confections statement is "Love is love is love is love". Havaianas claim that "o sol brilha até mais forte quando todo mundo se sente bem-vindo!".

Danone Portugal position is that they are Intolerantes à Intolerância. However, they are one of the brands that do not give more information on how they make this happen. On the same page is Control Portugal, declaring that "Só precisas de amor. E respeito!".

Table 16. Descriptive Codification: Distribution of the 8 typology categories by the 2021 Pride campaigns

Brand	LGBT facts	Imagery	Product orientation	Time-space	Internal support	Collabs and partnerships	Community engagement	Vague messaging
Control Portugal	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Só precisas de amor. E respeito!
Abercrombie & Fitch	No	Yes	Fierce Pride Edition - the same iconic scent, now in a redesigned bottle that celebrates love.	Trevor Project collaborates with A&F for more than a decade.	No	Yes	LGBT+ voices	Show your Pride. --- Everybody belongs.
C&A	No	Yes	Get into your favorite looks to let your personality shine. For LGBTQIA+U+ME, for every one!	No	No	Yes	LGBT+ artists and Riccardo Simonetti Initiative	LGBTQIA+U+ ME. Celebrating with Pride because love and togetherness are in our DNA.
Levi's	Celebrate and honor the first-Pride: the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969.	Yes	A collection with a call you can't ignore: Respect all pronouns. Because to use someone's pronouns is to see how they move through the world. Shop the link in our bio.	Supporting Pride 365. Levi's makes an annual donation to OutRight Action International.	Michael Glassmacher - My role is the Tailor at Times Square, however, I have worked in almost every role at the retail level over my 8 years with Levi's.	In support of this collection, Levi's makes an annual donation to @outrightintl.	Levi's x Brandon Flynn. Exploring the full scope of the human condition in his work as an actor, and advocating for LGBT+ rights on and off the screen, Brandon Flynn is becoming.	It's Pride 2021 & All Are Welcome. We see you and you are beautiful.
Crate and	In 1977,	Yes	No	No	Stay tuned	#HomeIsForE	Stay tuned for	This #Pride

Barrel	Harvey Milk challenged Gilbert Baker to come up with a symbol of pride to gay community. The Pride Flag, inspired by Judy Garland's "Over the Rainbow," flew at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade celebration on June 25, 1978.				for personal stories from our @crateandbarrel comunity	veryone is our initiative to share messages of hope and create safe spaces for the LGBTQIA+ community, in partnership with @itgetsbetter.	personal stories from our @crateandbarrel community and comment what makes you feel at home below.	month and beyond, everyone should experience the acceptance of home.
Danone Portugal	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Intolerantes à Intolerância.
Farfetch	'Near the end of 2020, the world watched Nigerian youth collectively bear their anger and shout together: "END SARS",' recalls artist @epastry. 'But in the midst of this,	No	No	No	Each guest editor has chosen a charity close to their hearts that Farfetch will donate to on their behalf.	'Growing up as a gay suburban kid, I feel like I looked for signs, images, words… anything that would give me hope that how I was feeling was	To celebrate #Pride2021, we partner with @brownsfashion and @brownsmens to highlight Pride pioneers.	No

	another refrain sounded, soft and loud: "Queer Lives Matter". It was the shout of Matthew Blaise.					OK,' says @openingceremony co-founder @humberto.		
Happy Socks	In 68 countries, homosexuality is considered a crime. This needs to change and this will only be possible if we fight for a fairer tomorrow.	Yes	Shopping our products. InterPride will receive 10% of the profits from all Pride products in our always-on collection sold throughout the year.	We want to contribute for real change in the world. So, we started by updating our Pride sock design to a more inclusive one.	No	COVID had a devastating impact on Pride organizations worldwide. This is one of the reasons why we have partnered up with InterPride.	We asked queer creatives to share how they Always Walk with Pride, despite the challenges the LGBT+ community still faces all over the world.	Help us create a world in where everyone will be able to Always Walk with Pride!
Harrys	No	Yes	Each set includes a limited-edition Harry's razor with a rainbowed finish, designed to be a true positive reflection of Pride.	Pride may have come to a close, but we're proud to support the community all year.	No	100% of profits from Shave with Pride collection go to The Trevor Project.	Stride With Pride: Jamie Windust.	Why be quiet when you can be loud and proud!
Havaianas	No	Yes	Qual seu item preferido da nossa coleção? Conta pra gente nos comentários!	Por aqui, todo amor é bem-vindo SEMPRE, 365 dias ao	No	The Havaianas Pride line donates 7% of net sales to	Orgulho é saber que o projeto Acolhe LGBT+ tem sido um sucesso! A	Afinal, o sol brilha até mais forte quando todo mundo se sente bem-

				ano, tá?		All Out.	plataforma foi criada pelos nossos parceiros da All Out.	vindo!
Ikea	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Confections	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Collecting money for the Lufkin high school diversity club.	We simply wanted to be inclusive. Thank you for your kindness.	Love is love is love is love!
Lego	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The LEGO Group is committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace. It partners with Workplace Pride, Stonewall and Open for Business.	In celebration of Pride Month, we asked LEGO fans to build something that shows what Pride means to them. Here are some highlights.	Yes
L'Oréal Paris	No	Yes	While Pride month is a celebration, it's also an opportunity to focus on some of the amazing non-profit organizations working to support the LGBTQIA+	L'Oréal supports @free.equal standards of conduct for business and stands for self-	Watch from start to finish our Global Makeup Director @thevalgarl and	At L'Oreal Paris we're proud to partner with the Ali Forney Center and NYC Pride, organizations	L'Oréal Paris launches 'Pride conversations' a two-day Instagram live takeover with members of the LGBTQIA+	The beauty of self-expression.

			community all year long. That's why we are donating 10% of retail sales to the Ali Forney.	expression as a powerful driver for change and a path for inclusivity.	phenomenal pride look! Would you dare to try it?	that support the LGBTQIA+ community.	community to inspire, engage, and celebrate our community.	
Mercedes-Benz	No	Yes	@mercedeseq EQA 250 | Stromverbrauch kombiniert 15,7 kWh/100 km | CO_2-Emission kombiniert: 0 g/km | mb4.me/DAT-Leitfaden-electric | mb4.me/WLTP_HQ	Mercedes-Benz is a strong brand with strong values. We stand for openness, trust and fairness.	We support the local communities with (…) sponsorship and employee (…) activities.	No	Mercedes-Benz and Athlete Ally partnered up to create "Safe Spaces.".	Pride is a celebration of all identities, as diverse as the colors of the rainbow.
Pantone	No	Yes	The new Pantone Pride Espresso Cup Set supports the WorldPride EuroGames occurring in Copenhagen and Malmö in August.	As a Danaher company we are proud to be a Silver Corporate Partner at the @humanright scampaign.	We are considered one of the best places to work for the LGBTQ+ community.	Enjoy your favorite espresso beverage in one of seven exciting colors.	Yes	🌈☁️✨
Polo Club	No	Yes	Get yours online now at www.poloclub.com	No	No	100% of the price of the unisex Polo Club Pride t-shirt goes to the Diversitat.	Today we celebrate love in all its forms, and the most important: self-love.	Feel free to be yourself because this is what makes you unique and special.
PUMA	No	Yes	Forever Free collection is	To signal the company's	Diversity and	20% of the proceeds, with	PUMA will celebrate this	Be proud 🌈

			available on online and in @puma_nyc	policy of welcoming people of all sexual orientations (…) the front of PUMA's headquarters in Herzogenaurac will light up in rainbow colors during June.	inclusion are a core part of PUMA's culture and the company encourages all of its employees to be their authentic selves.	a maximum donation of $500,000 USD, from the sales of this collection will go to the Cara Delevingne Foundation.	year's Pride season by hosting events, releasing a capsule collection and raising awareness of LGBT+ issues, as part of its continued support for the community.	
The Body Shop	Did you know? Trans women are twice as likely as cis women to consider themselves a failure?	Yes	No	We're working with @mindoutlgbtq, a charity we've partnered with since 2019.	No	Supporting your LGBT+ friends is an act of allyship. Ask how they're doing. Introduce them to MindOut.	9 ways we can be better allies to our friends in the LGBT+ community. Let us know what you'll be doing this Pride.	The more we listen and open ourselves up to different stories and experiences, the better chance we have of making positive change.
Patagonia	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	We raise our voice as advocates and will protest laws that discriminate against LGBT+ individuals (…)	Through activism, allyship and love, Patagonia proudly commemorates Pride.

5.1.4   Pride campaigns 2022: Typology development and descriptive codification

Table 17 summarizes the eight typology categories developed during this research and applied to the 2022 Pride campaigns. From here, we identified patterns, gaps, opportunities and threats in a descriptive codification with a deep qualitative lens for further understanding and exploration. Thus, the Table is an overview based on eight branches: LGBT facts, Queer Imagery, Product orientation, Time-space, Internal support, collabs and partnerships, community engagement, and vague messaging. Table 17 allows us to delve into the data from Table 18 and provide more insights for the discussion chapter.

LGBT facts

Only 10% of the brands fit the LGBT facts typology: Harrys and Havaianas. These two brands give a general picture of the LGBT+ community in their domestic markets: the United States and Brazil. It is 15% less than in 2021. However, we must consider that some brands that launched Pride campaigns in 2021 didn't communicate a new edition in 2022. The Harrys brand shares results and insights from The Trevor Project research, according to which 52% of transgender and nonbinary youth considered suicide in 2021. Havaianas promoted the research conducted by the Pesquisa Nacional da Saúde about LGBT+ people in 2019. By sharing LGBT facts, both brands assume an educational role with and to their communities.

Queer imagery

Fifteen brands (75%) use queer imagery to engage with the LGBT+ community during Pride Month. These brands are Control Portugal, Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Happy Socks, Harrys, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, L'Oréal Paris, Mercedes-Benz, Pantone, Polo Club, PUMA, and The Body Shop.

Product orientation

Thirteen brands (65%) created Pride campaigns in 2022 with product orientation, and they are The Body Shop, PUMA, Mercedes-Benz, Lego, Confections, Havaianas, Harrys, Happy Socks, Farfetch, Levi's, C&A and Abercrombie & Fitch. There is a link between using queer imagery and having a product orientation. Of the thirteen brands with Pride campaigns defined by their product orientation, only Farfetch don't use queer imagery. On the other side of the analysis, of the fifteen brands using queer imagery, only L'Oréal Paris

and Control Portugal didn't design rainbow-themed campaigns with product orientation. Pride collections may appear in several layers as the following ones:

a) As a way to celebrate Pride every day, all year round. E.g., Abercrombie & Fitch.

b) To collect resources to help LGBT+ associations, non-governmental organizations and services through donations and sponsorship. E.g., C&A, Harrys, Havaianas and PUMA.

c) As homages to LGBT+ voices and faces. E.g., Farfetch and Pantone.

d) To celebrate and energize LGBT+ and Pride symbols. E.g., Happy Socks.

e) To celebrate Pride. E.g., Confections.

f) To raise awareness and visibility of specific LGBT+ causes. E.g., Lego.

g) As a storytelling strategy to promote products. E.g., Mercedes-Benz and The Body Shop.

h) To promote the heritage owned by the brand and their efforts to fight against discrimination and for acceptance. E.g., Pantone and The Body Shop

These layers, as shown above, may be complementary and simultaneous.

Time-Space

Ten brands (50%) have an all-year commitment to the LGBT+ community, joining the conversation with a long-term strategy: The Body Shop, Pantone, L'Oréal Paris, Lego, Havaianas, Harrys, Happy Socks, Farfetch, Levi's, and Abercrombie & Fitch.

This long-term commitment allows us to avoid consumers' condemnation for inauthentic activism, woke washing and pinkwashing. This typology is an umbrella for other typologies, such as queer imagery, product orientation and rainbow-themed campaigns. Potentially understood as Pride appropriation, mainstream acceptance, and movement heritage deception, a long-term commitment implies continuity, integrity, credibility and symbolism. It may also help brands to be seen as authentic as they have the time to show consistency with their purposes, values, mission and actions.

Abercrombie & Fitch invite their community and consumers to celebrate in their new pride collection all year round. It also mentioned (discreetly) their longstanding partnerships with The Trevor Project. Harrys has an identical messaging strategy regarding its longstanding collaboration with The Trevor Project. Finally, Havaianas has a corresponding approach to Abercrombie & Fitch, but regarding the Pride collection, available all year.

The Levi's brand stands up for love, protests, and parties. It stands up for June and every month between January and December. It stands up for "you".
Happy Socks states they celebrate the LGBT+ people's freedom to be their authentic selves 365 days a year, not only during the Pride season. They go further: "Being an ally is not something that can be switched on and off when suitable.". By stating this, Happy Socks clarifies their long-term commitment and assume themselves as allies of the LGBT+ movement.

Many brands mention their internal initiatives and efforts. E.g., Farfetch, Lego, L'Oréal Paris, Pantone, and The Body Shop. The internal action plan includes events, research, LGBT employee groups, symbolic initiatives, and HR policies.

Internal Support

From HR policies to employee testimonials and Pride events, the internal support typology has a deep workplace dimension. Brands need to join the LGBT+ conversation, allowing them to potentially conquer more legitimacy to encourage real-lasting positive change, be purpose-driven, move from allyship to activism, and become relevant in the LGBT+ movement worldwide or locally. The Body Shop, Pantone, L'Oréal Paris, Lego, Farfetch, and Abercrombie & Fitch are the brands with Pride campaigns in 2022 that communicate their internal support to the LGBT+ community (N=6 or 30% of the total).

Abercrombie & Fitch spoke about their global home office associates showing up and out at the Pride Parade in Columbus, Ohio.

Farfetch gives the spotlight to its editors by sharing their favourite fashion icons. L'Oréal Paris has the same approach by sharing its platform with employees so they can tell their inspiring stories.

Lego LGBT+ employee advocacy groups arranged activities for Lego employees, such as Drag Queen Story Time, at their factory in Mexico.

Pantone highlights its internal work. For instance, share its 100% score on the corporate equality index and its role as Silver Corporate Partner at the Human Rights Campaign.

The Body Shop states firms are responsible for making the UK's workplaces more inclusive.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Thirteen brands (65%) communicate their work and collaborations with third parties. Collaborations and partnerships go beyond advocacy and messaging as the internal support typology. They help brands construct who they are and improve their co-creation processes between different players.

Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Farfetch, Happy Socks, Harrys, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, Mercedes-Benz, Pantone, Puma, and The Body Shop are the brands which implement these activism actions.

Most of these collaborations and partnerships and defined by donations to third parties, including associations and non-governmental organizations. E.g., PUMA, Lego, Confections and Happy Socks.

Personal stories from the LGBT community (e.g., Harrys, C&A and Farfetch) and assuming a lasting commitment to the LGBT+ community through a local, regional, national or worldwide partner (e.g., Havaianas and Abercrombie & Fitch) are possible paths to fit the typology under consideration. Finally, participating in and promoting events, including Pride events, is one of the actions available for brands (e.g., Levi's).

Community Engagement

Thirteen brands (65%) engage with the LGBT+ community during their 2022 Pride campaigns: Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Farfetch, Happy Socks, Harrys, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, L'Oréal Paris, Pantone, PUMA, and The Body Shop. This engagement has various layers, including:

a) Provide the spotlight on the LGBT+ community and their allies' voices. E.g., C&A, Havaianas, Pantone, The Body Shop and Harrys.

b) Participation in Pride events. E.g., Levi's and Farfetch.

c) Promoting activities all year round. E.g., Happy Socks.

d) Donations to LGBT+ players. E.g., Confections and PUMA.

e) Workplace stories and initiatives. E.g., Lego and L'Oréal Paris.

Vague Messaging

Twelve brands (60%) use vague messaging to celebrate the Pride season in 2022 or Pride Month. This vague messaging is mainly dedicated to co-create meanings with the audience, giving a storytelling dimension to the symbolic management of Pride by brands: Control Portugal, Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Farfetch, Harrys, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, Mercedes-Benz, Pantone, PUMA, and The Body Shop. Excluding the six brands without 2022 rainbow-themed campaigns, only Farfetch and Happy Socks are out of this typology usage.

Vague messaging goes from only using smiles or icons (e.g., Pantone) to broad rhetoric and statement words (e.g., Control Portugal, C&A and Harrys). There's also the pattern of calling for love, belonging and Pride against hate (e.g., Confections and Mercedes-Benz).

Table 17. Descriptive Codification: Distribution of the 8 typology categories by the 2022 Pride campaigns

Brand	LGBT facts	Imagery	Product orientation	Time-space	Internal support	Collabs and partnerships	Community engagement	Vague messaging
Control Portugal	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	O amor não se escolhe, sente-se. Já o respeito, é uma escolha.
Abercrombie & Fitch	No	Yes	Celebrate in our new Pride collection every day, every month, all year round.	Regardless of sales, we're donating $400,000 to our longstanding partner, the @trevorproject	Our global home office associates showed up and showed out at the Pride Parade in our hometown of Columbus, Ohio.	We believe LGBTQIA+ youth deserve a (…) loving world- and we, in partnership with The Trevor Project, are dedicated to making that a reality.	Yes	Where there's love, there's belonging.
C&A	No	Yes	An amount equal to the profits of the collection will be donated to IGLYO - the world's leading LGBTI+ youth network.	No	No	Nora is Evin's biggest ally. She accepted Evin for who she is and speaks up for her - no matter what.	This Pride Month we turn the spotlight on the LGBTI+ community and their brave and supportive allies.	Being there and listening is what true allies do.

Levi's	No	Yes	Head to stories to shop the Levi's® Pride Collection.	For loving. For living. For protests. For parties. For you. For your partner. For June. For every month between January and December.	No	This one goes out to all the weird kids @sefscatterbrain on growing up trans+autistic and style as armor.	Today we marched in the San Francisco Pride Parade with our friends from @larkinstreetyouthservices.	Pride 2022. You can't steal my joy with Corinne Smith.
Crate and Barrel	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Danone Portugal	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Farfetch	No	No	Swipe for an edit inspired by American actress #BeaArthur and shop all of the pieces on #FARFETCH	Our #FARFETCH BeautyGlobal Collective member @violetchachki shares the essential products that bring her glamorous persona to life.	To celebrate #Pride, we look at our editors' all-time favorite fashion icons. Swipe for an edit inspired by singer #DollyParton and shop all of the pieces on #FARFETCH.	'I stepped into my own transness when I was like two years old. I knew I was a woman from conception, I just didn't have the language'. @zion.moreno	#FARFETCHBEAT and @interviewmag celebrate #Pride at The Cock in New York.	No

Happy Socks	No	Yes	Our Pride Rainbow design shows the whole colorful rainbow flag in glitter.	At Happy Socks, we celebrate your freedom to be your authentic selves 365 days a year, not only during the Pride season. Being an ally is not something that can be switched on and off when suitable.	No	This year, once again we are proud to partner with @InterPride to raise funds for a good cause. InterPride receives 10% of the profits from all products in our Pride collection sold all year round.	We're also planning a number of activities to make LGBTQIA+ voices heard throughout the year.	No
Harrys	Research from The Trevor Project, has found (52%) of transgender and nonbinary youth seriously	Yes	Shop this year's Pride set at the link in bio.	Our commitment to give back does not end with our yearly #Pride campaign – we're proud to support The Trevor Project all year round.	No	"If I wake up one day and I'm like, 'All right, I want it off,' then I take it off. So that's when I feel truest is when I wake up and I decide what I	"Self-care is a full-time job. It's not just about your body or physicality, it's also about taking care of your mind". - Kevin (he/they)	Hair is hair. Wherever it grows, whoever you are.

	considered suicide in the past year.					want to do with my own body." —Arta (she/they)		
Havaianas	Foram divulgados os resultados da Pesquisa Nacional da Saúde feita em 2019, que trazem informações inéditas sobre as pessoas LGBT+.	Yes	Novidades no ar! Conheça as novas Havaianas Pride que acabaram de chegar por aqui.	A coleção Pride é permanente e 7% do lucro de cada produto é revertido para @alloutbr. Um movimento global em defesa do amor, da igualdade e dos direitos LGBT+.	No	Somos mais fortes quando andamos lado a lado 🤝 A Havaianas está comprometida com a comunidade, em parceria com @alloutbr.	A Rafa e a Camilla estão juntas há 6 anos e escolheram o meu Tênis Havaianas TNS Pride Rainbow pra fazer parte do lookinho mais especial de todos: o do casamento delas.	Havaianas. Orgulho de caminhar com você.
Ikea	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Confections	No	Yes	Cookie kits celebrating Pride will be available to order for shipping on my website later this week.	No	No	100% of the profits will be donated to Equality Texas.	My ✨151 donated cookie kits✨ for Teen Pride are filling tiny Concoctions to the brim!	More love. Less hate. Always🌈 🥰✨
Lego	No	Yes	We asked LGBTQIA+	Our LBGT+ Employee	Meet Hope, one of the	The LEGO Group will	This is the story of the Gayfols,	To celebrate Pride Month

			creators to build the first letters, now we need your creativity to build the rest of the alphabet!	Advocacy Groups are arranging activities for LEGO employees, such as Drag Queen Story Time at our factory in Mexico.	amazing creators behind the A-Z of Awesome, a brick-built alphabet of LGBTQIA+ creativity	donate US$1 million to existing and new partner organisations in support of the LGBTQIA community.	founded as a network for LGBTQIA+ LEGO fans to share and create together.	we invited people from the LGBTQIA+ community to build the "A-Z of Awesome".
L'Oréal Paris	No	Yes	No	This Pride, and every day of the year, L'Oréal Paris is proud to be a faithful ally to the LGBT+ community. Starting with our employees, like Visna!	For this year's Pride, we share our platform with employees and friends of the brand so they can tell their inspiring and personal stories.	Yes	Sir John speaks from the heart. Love yourself more.	All Love Is Worth It
Mercedes-Benz	No	Yes	[EQS 580 4MATIC | WLTP: Stromverbrauch kombiniert: 21,3–17,7	No	No	No	No	Pride is about love and loving each other's differences.

			kWh/100 km | CO2- Emissionen kombiniert: 0 g/km]					Love comes in all colours.
Pantone	No	Yes	Link in bio to purchase.	As a Danaher company we are proud to be a Silver Corporate Partner at the @humanrights campaign.	We have received a 100% score on the corporate equality index.	Yes	"My work is super colorful and I love that it resonates with any community, but especially the LGBTQ+ family." - @jasonnaylor	🌈 by @mydailypantone
Polo Club	n.a.	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
PUMA	No	Yes	20% of collection proceeds, with a minimum of $250,000, to benefit GLAAD	No	No	20% of collection proceeds, with a minimum of $250,000, to benefit GLAAD.	Supporting Delevingne, and Carra Sykes, PUMA's "Together Forever" campaign is fronted by a cast that represents the diversity of the LGBTQIA+	Support each other. Be yourself. Celebrate the differences. Celebrate yourself. What does pride mean to you?

							community.	
The Body Shop	No	Yes	Meet Gabe, here's what he had to say about our Out of Love Highlighters.	That's why we've created a Work in Pride Charter to formerly establish our support for LGBTQ+ employees in the workplace.	We know the responsibility to make the UK's workplaces more inclusive rests with employers.	Yes	Meet Deni, we absolutely love the look he created using our 'Out of Love Highlighters'.	No
Patagonia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

5.2. Results of the primary data: In-depth interviews

The results and analysis of the primary data regarding in-depth interviews start with a brief introduction and analysis of the data sample characteristics (see Table 18). The analysis of this sample is the quick off for presenting the results by question cluster or uniting interchangeable groups to expose the dots, bringing and delivering the participant's perspectives, experiences, and opinions regarding brands getting involved in the LGBT conversation during Pride Month and beyond, including the process of placing purposeful brands in the spectrum of allyship and activism. Table 18 is the overview of the 58 in-depth interviews (return to tables 8 and 11 to see more) carried out during nine months distributed in the following categories: 16 activists, 12 associations (16 interviewees), 12 outside marketers, five inside marketers and DEI managers, and nine other profiles. The top three countries with more interviewees are Portugal (N=12), the USA (M=11) and the UK (N=8), with a total of 53% of the research participants. Below Brazil (N=2), many countries only have one participant. We achieved broad representation for these top three countries. With the other countries, as they have few participants, we were able to analyse and explore the process of moving from the allyship status to the activism mode within the LGBT conversation and Pride marketing campaigns from different contexts. Achieving different contexts allows us to connect our participants' contextual realities with their discourses. Ikea is the most preferred brand by interviewees, with five references. This brand follows by Patagonia, L'Oréal Paris and Levi's, all with three references.

Table 18. Characteristics of the Primary Data Sample

Top 9 interviewees countries	Total	Brands referred by interviewees	Total
Portugal	12	Ikea	5 (3 outside, 1 inside, 1 other)
USA	11	Patagonia	2 (1 association and 1 outside)
UK	8	L'Oréal Paris	2 (1 association and 1 inside)
Spain	4	Levi's	2 (1 association and 1 inside)
Canada	4	Happy Socks	1 (association)
Netherlands	3	Lego	1 (activist)
Denmark	3	PUMA	1 (association)
France	2	Pantone	1 (association)
Brazil	2	The Body Shop	1 (inside)
	= 49	Farfetch	1 (other)
		Control Portugal	1 (inside)

Now, we will present the participant's testimonials distributed by the question clusters. To see all the selected answers for this research, explore Appendix 4.

5.2.1 Private sector engagement with LGBT associations and activists

Associations reported multiple levels of collaborations and partnerships with companies and brands, allowing us to illustrate how they engage with the private sector. Association 15 clarifies the process of working with the private sector based on three key goals: activation, connection and empowerment. Diving into the work of Association 15:

> *Activation is to talk about LGBT+ diversity in the corporative world. We help the company to understand how to manage this type of diversity.*
> *Connect them. Companies want to do things, but sometimes they don't know how to do them. We connect companies with other companies already working on this LGBT+ diversity so that they can learn with others.*
> *The empowerment of these companies. We give them tools and knowledge about LGBT+ diversity on specific topics, from how to implement LGBT+ resource groups to how to welcome trans people.*

For association 3, Pride marketing actions during the Pride season are the most common engagement type, but the focus is on other two ways:

> *Companies can have limited-edition products or public advertising campaigns that involve a donation to ILGA Europe and a mention. Another way is a more internal option. Thirdly, we are trying to have more companies interested in getting involved in the advocacy process to support the community and talking to governments, putting pressure where and when needed. Usually, companies reach out with a proposal or an enquiry. Then we assess if the company would be a good partner for us, as we have a checklist to understand if the company has what it takes to be our partner, from headquarters to internal policies and supply chain, among others.*

Association 12 (protected identity) is an example of a more abstract engagement with the private sector, which may result from its direct mission of encouraging employers to build workplaces that celebrate all employees regardless of gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation, explaining the following:

Companies come to [us] in different ways. Sometimes, companies have an idea of a marketing initiative where they want to do something for Pride Month. Then, the month goes by, and nothing happens, and some brands receive criticism that they should be doing more and come to us. We do a 35-question audit on social inclusion to understand where companies are, their needs, and where they want to go.

A Canadian association has an assessment of 35 questions about inclusion with the function of culture audit to identify needs and where employees want to be. This assessment also occurs with ILGA Europe, given during the interview with the Partnerships Manager at ILGA-Europe, but classified as confidential.

Association 14, now with Colin Druhan (Executive Director), is aligned with Association 3 regarding the popularity of Pride season in the private sector, stating that this peak in demand "is not good". Colin continues:

Being a member does not mean that a company is doing anything or performing better than other companies. It means they have a commitment and want to learn. When a company signs up as a partner but does not do anything meaningful, we decide to remove it as a partner. The membership program is our primary source of revenue, but we answer to trans and queer communities in Canada. They are who our mission serves, so we must be conscious that some companies might sign up to say they are partners but not do anything after that.

Therefore, being a member or partner of an association or non-governmental organization is not a direct stamp of respect for human rights (UN standards), genuinely getting engaged with the LGBT+ community, and making positive changes to the life of queer people. However, it may be one step among others. Association 2 elucidates:

It says that this organization is a commitment to LGBT+ inclusion, and it's supporting the community outside the workplace.

Association 1 complements:

If you want to promote and work with charities and LGBT+ organizations, you can impact these organizations by raising awareness. You can also potentially impact by funding as there are organizations that need the help and the support. The

organizations can also help brands, as they may prevent them from falling into several traps and getting negative backlash from the community when working with LGBT+ issues. Companies have to do the work with their staff while you do the work externally. This genuine engagement gets reflected in business ethos. So, if your company ethos is about families, why don't to make sure the representation is not just about a nuclear family of a man, a woman and a child, or two children, but all sorts of families you might have? If your brand is saying one thing and your ethos is saying another message, it's never telling the same.

There are many layers of engagement with the private sector and several types of organizations. The type of partnerships and collaborations, the association's mission and work, the commitment time-space and the communication actions are some axes to consider when engaging LGBT+ players with the private sector. Participant Other 7 details how analyses this willingness of companies to engage with the LBGT conversation:

It depends on what companies are looking for. First, I look at the language companies use to speak about the community. Then I want to know if they are looking for support for gender or sexual orientation or the general population of LGBTQ+ people. I need to know where they are starting from. If they want to do something externally, I try to understand what they do internally because this is important.

Analysing and dissecting the requirements of associations to accept or decline to collaborate with a private company or the reasons why a company aims to work with specific associations instead of other ones allow to clarify and motivations behind joining the LGBT conversation during Pride Month or beyond. Aligned with this, association 2 explains:

We don't have specific requirements, as our decisions depend on the brand.

Moving to the perspective of LGBT+ activists and the collaborations between the private sector and the queer voices, faces, and influence, activist 12 states the following:

I'm very analytical and ethical. As an activist, what I've done and promoted gives the brand a lot of credibility. Burberry even did a piece of work with Casa, with a small donation, in which it said that for Casa it's one. For the activist, it's another, and the activist is much more expensive. Activists are the varnish that brands need. Being able

to engage in dialogue with a strong activist is a varnish that the brand wants, and I'm going to be very demanding: I want to know who the people involved are, how and what images are going to be released, what the proposal is, and only then can we sit down.

Does working with an association or activists communicate different messages to the audience and the community? Getting paid for the work, through goods, money or membership fees, strengthens or weakens the partnership? The Other 5 participant give some answers:

Brands are already looking for ways to advocate, and I think brands are doing more advocacy than activism. Corporates and activists are not friends. So, advocacy through lobbying and trying to change things and stereotypes is more friendly to corporations. Thus, corporations work with associations that do activism, and work together, as corporates do levels of advocacy, are beginning to speak up. Brand activism still needs to be explored in the corporation's space to understand why organizations are uncomfortable being more vocal.

5.2.2 Brands' legitimacy to celebrate queer people

Exploring the legitimacy (or lack of it) of brands to get involved in LGBT issues relates to the social fit of a brand. In other words, the extent to which a product, a service, or a company adheres to shared rules, standards, norms, or traditions of the market and community to become allies and LGBT brands-activists.

As winning legitimacy is long-term oriented, as occurs through several efforts, it goes beyond messaging and has a strategic soul. So, from advocacy to concrete actions, unpacking legitimacy includes having a voice and influence, but also the willingness, resources, and leadership to start the negotiation among consumers to create the perception that the actions of corporations are appropriate and authentic. Through this, the audience, the community, and the consumers perceive the organization and its claims as worthy of support. This process goes from symbolic value legitimacy to pragmatic legitimacy.

Drawing from the private sector engagement with LGBT associations and non-governmental organizations, it became momentous to understand how, when and why

brands have the legitimacy to celebrate queer people. Activist 2 highlights the internal work and awareness:

It would depend on the brand. For instance, if the company founder is pro-queer. As a tech company owner, if you are dissatisfied with the number of unemployed LGBT+ people because they don't have the qualifications, you can partner with education-focused entities to provide solutions and mitigate the problem. You eventually solve a challenge for the community that you want to solve. So, how do you want to be seen doing the work? Because if you want to put a rainbow on everything, that's not it.

To association 9, if a brand voice has impact, the right time to join the LGBT conversation arrived:

The right time to say something is when your voice has some impact. Marketing must represent something real. I want the kind of influence that companies have.

The outside marketer 12 advises that the purpose is not a Swiss army knife to start and consolidate the process of being an ally and then activist:

The purpose is not a tool to apply everywhere. Brands need to do it in a very conscious and authentic way, where the purpose belongs to the DNA of the brands and the values they stand for. So, purpose is a tool that can unlock additional growth, but it doesn't mean purpose can relate to everything. First, you need to answer: What is the brand purpose? And only then you can see how to apply it.

5.2.3 Reasons why brands are getting involved in the LGBT conversation

Integrity is one of the six components of authenticity, referring to the opposition between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. It is the extent to which a brand is intrinsically motivated, acting consistently over time. When the markets and the community perceive a brand's actions as intrinsically motivated, the positive outcomes achieved may grow. Outside Marketer 6 makes a throwback to when brands started joining the conversation:

I remember when brands started having an interest in joining the LGBT conversation. I was there. We began to see that interest in the early 90s, when

companies like American Airlines and Absolute Vodka started supporting the LGBT community. In the late '90s and early '20s American Airlines was a big sponsor of GLAAD, and what they did is to give us vouchers to travel. I would not be able to do all the work I did if we did not have access to travel. Corporate America started to see LGBT people more as a market than as a community. Through the lens of media and representation, they were presented not an accurate representation of our community but a representation of part of us: the white gay men with income. That is why we have started to be perceived as a distinct market. I am not saying that in a bad way. However, the fallacy here is that it over-compensated it in terms of expectations. And you are also dealing with a community that welcomed that support with open arms because we have not been supported or recognized. At the same time, individuals were saying that this could be a huge piece of how we create change in the culture and get recognition as people and consumers in the capitalist society. We supported and educated the corporate supporters by saying that what you are doing is good and that you are doing the right thing, but you can't just put a rainbow flag on something or throw stuff at us because it impacts your bottom line. We are not stupid. We know things need to be good for your bottom line. You are businesses. But we must understand that we are not all a group of rich gay white men with no kids that take four cruises a year. The key is that we are loyal consumers if you support our community and our organizations.

The consequential form of moral legitimacy results from adopting procedures and techniques; the procedural form is the communication of social outcomes (useful in scenarios where there are no favourable outcome measures and, for example, a company shares details of how its social programmes); and the structural form reflects intrinsic features that are worthy of support (e.g., the company board has a sub-committee dedicated to addressing LGBT+ acceptance in the workplace). Thus, to Other 4 participant, the main reason is that capitalism is changing:

The private sector has inherently caused damage to the world, so there is a good reason why the population is so suspicious of the private sector. First, companies cannot live in a world where such a significant part of the population lacks dignity and economic opportunities and sometimes is unfairly criminalized and not considered it. Secondly, the guidelines for business are clear: the guidelines from

United Nations about businesses' responsibilities for human rights. When I was at the United Nations, I translated those responsibilities into a document which is the Standards of Conduct for Business regarding LGBT+ rights, which are now part of the Human Rights framework. The last reason is the economic argument that taking a stand on LGBT rights is good business. When companies are good on LGBT rights, the public is interested in it, creating the risk of pinkwashing as it is easy to be LGBT-friendly.

External motivations are on the other side of why brands are getting involved in the LGBT conversation and include the aim of achieving financial gains (the gay dollar), for example. However, it is possible to combine both motivations, being a balance between C-level philosophy, business goals, and internal culture, as Association 1 proclaims:

For brands, it is business. There is an entire community they can work with. But it is also what the brand value as a company. If their company values are more about wanting to get the most out of their people, you will more genuinely care about their people wellbeing, and it will be a more inclusive space for LGBT+ communities. Finally, brands see it as if they can make a difference in the world, depending on their CEO and senior structure. Or customers can demand that change.

Association 15 highlights the role of inclusive leaderships, claiming:

We need to make sure that the commitment comes from the top management. Otherwise, the corporation is not really committed, and this is worse than not doing anything, as you will have something understood as bad by a segment of the market. You will not be able to clarify that and connect it to your values and to human rights.

Associations 5 identifies three axes for brands joining the LGBT conversation.

We know why they do it. There are three justifications all businesses relate: engage their staff, reputation, and there are good people working that want to take a stand. However, it is better not to do anything than to do something that looks pinkwashing.

Exploring this idea of pinkwashing, where consumers condemn inauthentic ally and activist brands, Activist 12 argues that displaying rainbow colours is not enough:

What companies are trying to show with their LGBTQ+ support is that they are progressive caring organizations, so people buy from them instead of other companies. But usually, when companies get involved, they are not really saying enough. Defend us, be the allies we need. They might be just producing rainbow goods and collecting money during Pride month. Displaying rainbow colors is not enough. We see it as rainbow capitalism, a turn-off. Many companies with a rainbow campaign secretly or not so secretly donate to anti-LGBTQ+ causes and groups.

Two questions raise to companies:
   a) What are your motivations and intentions for your support?
   b) What are you expecting from your support?

5.2.4   The LGBT challenges in the current world

Brand activism demands connecting with the community. Therefore, brands must go beyond symbolism, promises and rhetoric to fight against prejudice and not do just the bare minimum. To successfully promote the visibility and validate the existence of LGBT people, it is mandatory to understand the challenges for this community worldwide. For Activist 2, the challenge is in balance visibility, misinformation and real progress:

The primary challenges the amount of traction we gather that is used against us. We have visibility, there has been more knowledge production, and while we have been using this knowledge production to build our community, there has been taken and misinterpreted by many others as an effort to say that we are introducing something into the knowledge space that shouldn't be in the knowledge space" Beyond misinformation is disinformation targeted to communities that otherwise would be open to participate in the learning process. However, they have been told and keep getting told that as more information there is about us, it means that we are creating something that never existed. I'm conscious that change doesn't happen because I'm saying it's happening. The real-world progress in the

introduction of more inclusive paternity leave is the introduction of recognizing surrogacy in human resources policies. These are the real-world progressions that we are advocating for, and they will happen through advocacy for LGBT+ people.

The education ground is highlighted by Association 1 as one of the challenges for the LGBT community nowadays:

Education is a little battleground because we are trying to ensure everyone has an inclusive education and school. We do have a more inclusive curriculum, Scotland more than the rest of the UK, but we now have that LGBT lives have to be mentioned in education, when before it was forbidden. In the US, we are seeing a backlash, and the research shows the relevance for children to see people like themselves for their mental health. There are still laws to be fought.

Pride health comes up as a challenge in the words of Association 4:

It's a very healthy movement because around 60% of Pride worldwide are in Europe, which shows the health of the movement in Europe. It also highlights the unhealth of the movement in other parts of the world. The number of Prides in Europe is increasing. The more Pride we have, the more inclusion we have.

To Activist 6, the real challenge is to show that queerness is not a Western trend or culture, which is contextual-sensible:

There's the idea that the woke queerness is very westernized, and people think it is the Western culture that is making people identify as queer. For me, the corporate engagement is good for the activism, but how are they getting involved? I would say the best way is through financing and providing technical support.

5.2.5 Brand's access to allyship and activism within the LGBT context

The main research question of the study is rooted in exploring the process of moving from allyship status to brand activism positioning within the LGBT context. However, before acknowledging this process through formulating and implementing marketing activities designed to support a controversial cause, we must step back and question the decision-making process of the private sector to build meaningful, authentic and sustainable

engagement partnerships and collaborations with the LGBT community and if brands can build allyship and activism positionings. From our participant's perspectives and experiences, we have three broad levels to dissect the access of brands to allyship and activism within the LGBT context:

1. Brands can potentially engage with the LGBT movement and become allies and activists for its issues. But there's still an uncovered path to understanding how brands can be activists.

2. Brands are not activists. However, they can be tools, provide resources, and stand by the community when something happens, but they always measure risks. Their alignment with the cause is strategic.

3. Brands are not allies or activists. They are advocates.

We must begin with distinguishing allyship, advocacy, and activism. Activist 2 states:

> *Allyship says that when something happens, we stand by you. While activism says: When something happens, we are on the frontline with you, not standing by, but if you need the money, we will give you the money. If you need printing services, we will give you the printing services. We are willing to put our resources into advocacy efforts.*

Exploring level number one, we have different approaches. Activist 1, aligned with Activist 5, proclaims clearly and loudly:

> *All brands have the potential to get involved and become activists.*

Association 1 is more conservative than Activist 1, warning that it all depends on how we define activism (in general terms is about taking allyships one step further). Also, Association 1 distinguishes different actions of brand activism, such as lobbying (public engagement in political activism), publicly supporting LGBT rights and acceptance, and accurate media representation:

> *Brand activism could be companies' lobbies for changes in parliament. But activism can also be standing up in cultures that are not very inclusive. It can be showing an LGBT+ couple in an advert for 30 seconds. This representation could*

be as much activism as lobbying in the parliament. Activism is taking allyship a step further, but again is how you define activism.

Outside Marketer 7 dives into what is and what is not brand activism, from using Queer imagery during Pride Month to political engagement:

Brand activism is doing something that probably is not even good for them in the short-term, but that is good because it is related to their values. Not every cause is activism. When you try to lobby to change a law or to defend your interests, when corporations do that, it is activism because you are trying to make changes in the legislative field. If a brand celebrates Pride, that is not activism. But if you are celebrating in Saudi Arabia, it could be activism, as it can be dangerous to the brand and helpful for the people to whom you are doing that. Usually, brands are not the first ones creating a conversation, but they have the power to push them. Generally, brands come after society.

Outside Marketer 11 does not exclude brands from an activist positioning but highlights the struggle to become achieve one:

The step of moving from allyship to activism is big. Activism includes active and revolutionary thinking. Being an ally gives visibility, and visibility is the first step on the road to respect. I have developed a formula in my research: visibility, representation, tolerance, acceptance, and respect. There is allyship and activism, but a brand does not have to be an activist to bring the message across as long they are allies is already enough.

Association 5 believes in brand activism, but with a few nuances, as symbolic management is not as powerful as it was at the end of the 20th century. Substantive management becomes recommended for brands to join the LGBT movement. It sees advocacy as part of activism and not a separate stage in the spectrum of getting involved in the LGBT conversation:

Advocacy is part of activism as brand activism goes from messaging to practice and is not just symbolic. Big businesses marching in Pride in London and using the rainbow flag is not as strong as it was. When they did 20 years ago, that was symbolic. It could have a significant impact in terms of people feeling they would

be welcomed in those businesses, contributing to changing attitudes. So, the context is sensible. If a bank puts a rainbow flag in one of its windows in London, does that makes a big difference now? Probably not. If a bank does this in Kenya, it might have a huge impact. Activism is broader than advocacy, as advocacy is messaging.

Participant Other 2 is the most vocal about advocacy considering brand access to allyship and activism, explaining that the political side of activism scares brands and organizations:

I think they are neither. I would use the word advocates. Corporations tend to run away from the word activists because it makes them feel it is political. Getting into was considering a political space, by which I mean being an activist. Organizations usually see that as a dangerous territory because it can be easily misinterpreted or twisted by somebody who wants to take the message in another direction. Allies are hugely important, but many people see it as a passive term as it means I believe in your cause, and I support your cause but do not expect me to do anything about it. It is a horrible generalization because many allies are prepared to step up. However, at that point, they will become advocates, and it is championing your cause, especially if it is not their cause, who are only supporting you. So, organizations hate to be called activists and can't become allies because if they are allies, they are probably too passive. An organization doing what it should be doing is, for me, an advocate and is powerful. They are the wheels of influence. As an advocate, you are something that we should be championing. Make sure your cause is real, and we will support you.

Association 3 comes with an opposite perspective compared to Association 1. It considers actions as media representations, supporting advocacy efforts or other substantive strategies as results from corporate citizens with core values but not as activist moves.

They are not activists and do not need to take this role. The time of thinking that companies' only purpose is to make a profit for their shareholders is over. They want to be corporate citizens with core values in several ways, such as inclusive workplaces, donations to LGBT associations, having LGBT representation in advertising where they operate, and supporting advocacy efforts, among other

actions and policies. These actions are aligned with their values but are not part of being an activist.

Getting to the final layer of brands' access to allyship and activism positionings, the participant Other 4 claims that brands are allies and not activists, explaining the following:

Being an activist is taking risks. I considered an LGBT+ leader to be slightly crazy. Usually, LGBT+ activists lose a lot, and I have never met a brand that had a tremendous sacrifice for the LGBT cause. They take very calculated risks that have paid off. Activism is courage. Brands do not have the courage to the extent of losing something.

Activist 10 emphasises brands are externally motivated when joining the LGBT cause:

I think brands ultimately are not activists. Brands are strategically aligned with activism to sell their products. At the end of the day, if any brand claims to be an LGBT+ advocate or activist, if supporting LGBT+ people led to their profit margins slipping, they would not do it. And any activism based on making more money is not activism. You are creating positive change for yourself before you create positive change for anyone else.

Activist 2 identifies three levels of being an activist. The first two are individually related, and the last one is about brand identity and fidelity, giving the example of Nike, distinguishing being pro-queer and commercialising this support:

NIKE never tried to ride the rainbow train. But can we say that Nike is not pro-queer? No. Nike is very pro-queer but does not try to merchandise it. A brand like Nike, not having a rainbow anywhere, for somebody else, can say that Nike never showed their support to the Queer community, when in fact, on the ground, they have. Activism by proximity is not activism by practice.

5.2.6   Making a positive and lasting difference in the LGBT community

Drawing from Activist 6 statement about if brands can be activists, which claims that "brands can be activists and allies of change", we must understand if they can provoke concrete, measurable and long-lasting change in the world. Inside DEI Manager 5 supports

the potential of brands to make a positive difference in the LGBT community through the example of Levi's:

> *Levi's has been an example able to positively impact the LGBT+ communities, giving the community a stronger voice and presence. You can through the holistic approach of supporting or posing legislation that is inclusive or exclusive, funding non-profit organizations dedicated to protecting and upholding the LGBTQ community, participating in the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index, having benefits that are inclusive for LGBTQ employees and their partners having benefits and other perks that are going to be in support of the LGBTQ+ community and families. All of that is part of the commitment and makes it very real and tangible.*

Several activists claim that activists are willing to take risks and be in danger, and there is a common ground regarding the idea that brands are not ready to lose in the name of the LGBT community. Activist 6 states the following:

> *Being an LGBT+ activist requires courage. Being an activist means that your social life needs to be in suspense.*

But it recognises the power of brands to influence and help:

> *Brands influence society as they help people to understand how inclusiveness works.*

Activist 12 accentuates this danger with a context-sensible example:

> *In Brazil, the first response is to understand if you're ready to die. You can be executed at any moment. It's about having that boldness and thirst to produce life.*

If some participants argue brand activism occur through accurate media representation, which can provoke social change, Association 14 points out that brands don't generate a difference through advertising. It can create unfavourable outcomes, as explained below:

> *It harms queer and trans people if you are constantly putting a rainbow everywhere. Every exposure comes with a kind of backlash, so when we get visual*

support with real support is a lose-lose situation. So, solve a problem of the community, advocate for a right, and not stay silent when people try to criminalize who we are. If you are doing this and a marketing campaign, that fines and does not matter what some people think.

Participant Other 5 highlights that businesses avoid colliding with governments, and despite brand activism exists, it is a romantic idea for all its difficulties to be implemented:

The social governance sustainability commitments and human rights commitments that brands make are brand activism. But some brands are unable to take a step further and say that they want to get involved with governments, for example.

As brand activism relies on strategic communication to impart social change, Inside Marketer 3 defines The Body Shop activism through the goal of provoking tangible change:

My biggest frustration about brand activism is the feeling that you must have an opinion about everything every time. And we strongly believe it is better to be a little slower and more thoughtful in our response. What can we do, and how can we be more impactful? What is our position? What can we get people to do? What are we doing already? We do not want to be reactivists. We want to be activists and provoke tangible change. That is how our activism is defined.

5.2.7   The geographical scope of allyship and brand activism

The literature defines the geographical scope as one of the several types of CRM programs (Galan-Ladero, 2013). This research also considered it necessary to understand brand activism and allyship. Mirzaei et al. (2022) argue activism occurs when brands support a controversial issue, addressing an unresolved matter on which societal and institutional opinion is split (Nalick et al. 2016). That said, adopting a public activist positioning in the UK but not on Saudi Arabia is not activism? Inside DEI manager 5 explains that Levi's have a diversity program with a global vision but with local action plans:

Country by country, function by function. We are working to get as specific as possible, but LGBTQ+ identity transcends borders, similar to gender identity.

There are some global commonalities in some of the challenges that the community faces.

This claim aligns with Inside marketer 2 perspective, according to whom Ikea, globally, has only one guideline to avoid conflicts with the governments of countries where being gay, for example, is illegal:

Overall, the only indication is that we don't talk about these issues in places where it's illegal because we don't override the law. Even where it is illegal, we have public affairs work, liaising with governments, which is more subtle but happens to have an impact on what could be a change in the law, for example. We're not interested in open wars with governments.

Outside Marketer 2 is clear about how being vocal only in countries with open laws about the LGBT+ community allows to distinguish activists from non-activists, giving the example of Ikea:

The fact that brands being such an active force in progressive countries and don't do so in markets where the issue is still taboo means that Ikea has made a legitimate decision not to make this cause a battlefront because I don't know if that's its role either (…). For me, an activist defends their battle with the same force in a favourable or unfavourable civil society. It's someone who doesn't keep quiet and who fights. I don't know if brands fight because they must ensure it doesn't have a negative reaction. The majority of civil society has to be ready to accept it.

5.2.8 Expectations of seeing brands getting involved

Activist messaging and positionings create expectations. The expectations of fighting against prejudice, being authentic, taking risks, joining the conversation with symbolic and substantive actions, conquering pragmatic and moral legitimacies, and taking public stands for the LGBT cause to provoke tangible changes. It means scrutinisation. Trust, confidence, familiarity, and truth demand doing more than the bare minimum and getting connected. There are expectations and tensions when brands start producing rainbow goods without talking about LGBT people's lives. Asking our research participants what their expectations are when they see brands getting involved is to ask: How do activist brands

look like? How do they sound? What stories do they create? What are they accountable for?

Recalling outside marketer 6, the LGBT+ community welcomed

That support with open arms because we have not been supported or recognised.

And, now what? Association 13, for example, expect dialogue and visibility:

I expect reciprocal conversation, a real conversation, authenticity, and commitment. I expect brands to commit to and support us financially and by educating people: spread the word about us.

Association 7 also highlights dialogue, with a call-to-action for brands to work closely with the LGBT+ communities and associations:

Dialogue, that brands reach out to associations and communities; understand their projects and needs; understand that beyond the rainbow flag, there are social problems, celebrations of love and resistance; and identify what matters to LGBT+ people and where they can contribute. It's not enough to fill a shop window with rainbows.

If associations highlight dialogue, collaboration and continuity, activists and outside marketers emphasise the need to start from the inside to the outside. Activist 2 claims:

I expect that they are internally supporting and making sure LGBTQ people within their systems are getting access to dignified life because it would be ridiculous for them if they say that they want everyone to get a dignified life but don't care about their employees.

5.2.9   Pinkwashing and Pride appropriation: An All Year of Pride begins?

As our code structure aimed to understand the process of moving from allyship to activism within the LGBT context, overcoming promises, rhetoric and symbolism, participants are exceptionally unanimous regarding brands celebrating and joining the LGBT+ movement only during Pride Month (June). According to their perspectives, it is to get "the pink dollar" (Association 1), it is "money laundry" (Activist 2), "performative allyship"

(Association 4), "is inappropriate" (Association 2), "is not enough" (Outside Marketer 7), and it is "hurting the LGBT community" (Other 4). These accusations and reactions about brands being vocal only during Pride Month punctuate the consumer's condemnation of inauthentic activist brands, explained by Moorman (2020), Vredenburg et al. (2020), and Clements (2017). From brands, Association 8 requests money and time:

> *Look at the areas where you have an impact and make donations or give everyone in the business one day off used for charitable contributions. We could secure millions of hours of support for organizations under-supported. There's a gay world which is not full of parades and rainbows. It is full of violence and death, and raising this awareness is very important. We can't let the pink washers pretend they are doing the right things when they are not because then the people doing the right things are losing the voices that we need them to have.*

The literature claims to be an ally, and moving to an activist position means continuity and consistency with the purpose and values of the corporation (Schallehn et al. 2014), implying credibility, continuity, integrity and symbolism. Activist 2 strengthens this claim:

> *It is the equivalent of money laundry when you say you will not make any charitable donation until June. And then, in June, we will make all our donations to the LGBTQ community, as they will appreciate, we see them and the money. However, every other month of the year, you act against LGBT people. It is money laundry. You cannot just pop up for one time. You can use that one time and say that every single sale you do during June goes towards charitable organizations, or if you partner up with one single organization, that organizations have the legitimacy to make you accountable. Are you advocating for LGBTQ+ people during the other eleven months?*

Following Miguel and Miranda's (2023) emphasis on being sincere about how brands address the issue and contribute to the cause, Association 2 argues:

> *I think it is a fair discussion to have. As Pride members, we expect that brands are committed to our community all year round, and we want to see progress with and within these companies. When we look at our partners, they do all of that. During*

the Pride month, they do more than they do during the year. Don't do it only to sell more products.

Vredenburg et al. (2020) talk about authentic activists' brands, inauthentic, silent, and absent, considering that as demand for brand activism growths, consumers tolerate baby steps if they are transparent but not misleading actions as explored by Ashforth and Gibbs (1990). Outside Marketer 7 corroborates this positioning:

Brands must position themselves during Pride. It is important as part of the LGBT community. But this is not enough. Changing the logo during Pride is relevant, but if this is the only thing during the year, it can be bad. We always recommend working all year and working with specialists. There are plenty of associations around the world able to work with brands to help them understand the needs of the LGBT community inside and outside and to create programs. Companies that are not saying anything throughout the year because they don't have anything to say are not doing anything inside the company that it is relevant. In my experience, when companies don't communicate, normally is (...) because they have nothing to say.

Outside Marketer 7 perspective recalls the Mirzaei et al. (2022), Moorman (2020), and Vredenburg et al. (2020) argument that brands should get involved with social-political issues when there is alignment between messaging and practice. So, when they have something to say. The participant Other 4 opinion adds:

I am not interested in companies that are not doing the work. With the Standards of Conducts for Business, we wanted that if you say that you want to be LGBT-friendly, that's enough for us to endorse these standards. You don't have to be perfect. I just need you to say that you are on a journey to try to align your policies and practices to the international standards of the human rights of LGBT people. From time to time, I get angry with companies because if they are not living the values they are proclaiming, they are hurting the LGBT community.

Outside Marketer 1 adds:

I have been cautious about how corporate Pride has become. Twenty years ago, seeing a brand marching in Pride was incredible. Nowadays, seeing a three-hour parade full of politicians and marketing will do more harm than good. (...) To march, you should also care about the health of trans people the security of LGBT youth or the rights of LGBT refugees. It's not just marketing, as there is something inherently political in the movement that businesses need to get on board with or don't bother. We need to go back to that place.

5.2.10 Step-by-step to develop LGBT strategic communication

Outside Marketer 11 describes an LGBT strategic communication plan where marketing is the last stage:

Marketing the rainbow is the last stage in the diversity program of a company. The first stage is developing an HR policy of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (...) where the companies sign to pay attention to all employees, support them and give platforms to be themselves.

So, to this participant, the first stage is the internal diversity definition and execution, referring to human resources policies. Next, it would be the supply chain (market) and then marketing strategy and campaigns (communication):

The second phase is supplier diversity, where the company says it wants 5% of its purchases from companies run by women, and 5% by LGBT+ people, etc. The last stage of diversity is marketing and communication. It is marketing the rainbow. (...) means showing the company LGBT+ diversity in campaigns, above the line and below the activities. It can't be done with any credibility if you don't have the first stage of the process in order.

Participant Other 2 complement this need of having staff onboard to be successful:

The organization must integrate rather than assimilate, or they will chase diversity instead of inclusion. Diversity without inclusion is worse than nothing because it puts a bunch of people together who can't relate to each other. The next step is to ensure these people know how to interrelate and achieve the best of each other and

take advantage of their differences. But you also need the organization to step in. It is a mix of the two.

Outside Marketer 7 recommend a six-step strategy, which includes stages such as timeline, actors involved and internal proofs. Step 1:

If companies want to avoid pinkwashing, they must position themselves on these issues at different times of the year, not just in June and July.

Then, the commitment to diversity is crucial:

Companies cannot maintain a complicit silence.

To have a genuine and authentic commitment, the C-level must be active in the conversation:

CEOs must be more protagonists. They cannot be absent from the conversation.

Finally, there is the importance of telling and doing, always with the expertise of specialists and the experience of the community (both inside and outside the company), and avoiding generic messages (two stages condensed into one):

Doing versus telling by the specialists. It must develop LGTBIQ+ diversity programs with associations to generate points of contact and conversation with the outside world. Avoid general messages and influence the collective pain points. Conversations must be worked on through dialogue with the people in the community, both inside and outside the company, to understand where their pain points are.

The last stage is mobilisation:

Mobilise employees and make leadership visible. Making LGBT+ leadership visible among employees helps listening and dissemination (...).

Association 5 proposes a five-step strategy, with some touchpoints with the six-steps one given by Outside Marketer 7:

Business needs to take steps to get involved: (1) Make sure it is doing well internally. They are supportive of their LGBT+ staff; (2) To look beyond the four walls and think about the impact they are having in the communities where they are operating and think about how to support LGBT+ rights externally; (3) Learning and consultation to make sure that they are talking to LGBT+ organizations, to activists; (4) Making a long-term commitment and not just during Pride and providing flexible support; (5) and sharing that learning, collaborating with other businesses.

Outside Marketer 5 highlights the relevance of doing the homework first:

One of the biggest mistakes brands make when they want to get started is not having their house in order first: not having the right message and messenger to deliver it.

The importance of going from the inside to the outside resonates with Activist 1 positioning, who also advocates the importance of engaging the community with the decision to join the LGBT conversation:

Ask your workers. Start from the inside out. What do your employees think (...) about getting involved in LGBT community issues, in their community? Another element is to ask people from the community to guarantee that people from the community within the organisation are involved.

DEI manager 5 concludes this internal relevance with two keywords: workforce and workplace:

Your strategy must be built on an in-depth assessment of your workforce and workplace. What does the environment look like? It is not just who the people are but what is the culture you are creating. You need support from your leaders, your CEO, and the top of the organization. You need an inspiring strategy yet actionable enough so all employees, people, managers, and executives can participate.

Is it possible to measure the results of joining the LGBT conversation as an activist brand or an ally? Other 2 considers that measuring strategic communication to provoke social change is also a challenge, especially externally:

You can always ask if your staff is feeling better. Internally, you have complete control. Externally, if you are a champion of change, you need to look if that's creating change where you want to. Sometimes you must accept that you are doing is creating soft progress in terms of cultural change rather than looking to something that is a statistic and a tangible win.

On the other hand, Outside Marketer 12 says that you must ask through brand studies:

Yes, you can measure the impact of having a purpose. When you want to capture something that it's intangible, that it's in people's minds, you need to ask them. So, you do brand studies to understand what people think about the brand and what attributes your brand states (brand attributes).

Association 3 identifies several ways, from social media metrics to the amount of money raised:

We have different ways of looking at it. The social media reach and engagement, the amount of money raised/ donated, among other things.

The time-space is referred a metric by Association 5:

In the case of Levi's, it has provided long-term support and supported two of our urgent appeals. So, there's a tangible example of Levi's giving money to support life rescuing of LGBT lives or people and difficult places.

The product orientation is also seen as a possible criterion for measuring results by Inside Marketer 1, as the more the brand sells its rainbow-themed collection, for example, the more successful the purpose-driven campaign was:

Understanding sales: if you have a limited edition Pride product with 100 per cent of the profits going to an association; in the medium to long term, brands have various tools to feel the pulse of the consumer. I can tell if Kérastase is a trusted brand in Europe, and if I'm improving this, it means I'm doing a good job.

Activist 2 call brands to be conscious about the responsibility of public stands:

What brands need to be very conscious of is if they pick one rather than acknowledging that one sits in this great web, they can't be defensive when called out of it. We have brands merchandising the rainbow, but their production lines are in countries where their employees are explored. So, as consumers we can ask: What is your politics? When I buy something, I am making a declaration to the world.

5.2.11 From communicating to exploiting change

Legitimacy allows brands to join the LGBT conversation and to communicate change without seeming exploitative. Outside Marketer 8 refers to Ikea as an example of a brand that not only places LGBT couples in advertising as it has the legitimacy to do it as it engages in further support of this community:

I can give the example of Ikea, a brand we work with at UZINA. Ikea has a tradition of featuring LGBT+ couples in its advertising, Pride, but before Ikea talks about this subject. There is an advertising purpose of trying to represent the reality, but there is a legitimacy related to them practising within their home. In other words, they have a set of good practices for accepting and promoting people who belong to these minorities. When a brand like Ikea comes to talk about Pride, there is legitimacy. It is not strange.

Inside Marketer 3 sees communicating change as demanding internal coherence:

The work inside the company reflects what we are saying on the outside. Any celebration of Pride or sale of products related to Pride needs to walk the talk. It is imperative before we go out with an external voice that we have our internal policy correct, so we have a diversity network called The Body Shop Together Network, which has published a Work in Pride chapter which outlines the specific policies that we have in place to support the LGBT+ communities.

In other words, considering the Outside Marketer 5 view, consistency is about "putting your money where your mouth is and putting your mouth where money is". Association 4 reinforces this perspective:

You walk the walk, and you talk the talk. And that is what businesses need to do.

That said, Inside Marketer 4 agrees with the idea of communicating what the company is doing, highlighting that being inclusive is not a value but must be structural:

> *For me, being inclusive is not a value. It should be structural, and we can't just think about Europe. It shouldn't be a value in itself at the moment. It should already be an integral part of respect, and respect comes through balance and different sexual preferences (which a company has nothing to do with). Communication is important and useful for companies to show that they are making this path.*

Association 9 says backstage communication is helps companies showing their support, but it has substantive actions:

> *The backstage communication is incredibly important and can't be broadcasted, but companies can say they support the protection, well-being, and decriminalization of the LGBT+ community. The corporation must understand how it operationalizes that public declaration and what that is going to look like. It might be collaborations with local activists, it might be partnerships with advocacy organizations in different forms, and there is also recruiting and enhancing talent.*

Communicating support without doing the work defines pinkwashing and is one of the concerns brands must have, according to participant Other 2:

> *Pinkwashing is an organization that is wanting to be seen as LGBT+ inclusive but doesn't do enough work to be LGBT+ inclusive, it just wants to world to think it is. Organizations are tempted to be just very visible, with the rainbow logos, instead of getting into changing their culture.*

And to avoid being seen as doing Pinkwashing, participant Other 1 explains:

> *Having an HR policy that is also specifically dedicated to LGBT+ people and takes into consideration, for example, parental leave for all employees and family's constellations globally is a way to show that corporations walk the talk.*

Also, the C-level has to be commuted too, according to Inside DEI Manager 5:

(...) It is important, especially that your top leadership is aligned to how you are going to use your voice because there could be ramifications, social, political, cultural, in your company.

5.2.12 The Queer imagery: Are rainbow logos, Pride collections, rainbow-themed campaigns and partnerships enough?

As brands move from placing advertisements in LGBT media to assume sides, consumers become sceptical regarding the use Queer Imagery (Li, 2022) by the private sector. This attention increases during Pride. If Pride appropriation is a sign of mainstream acceptance, it is a deception of the movement's heritage. Association 7 claims:

We feel that Pride month is starting to be instrumentalised, stealing all the years of demands, breaking the silence, stealing space with no return, and it could take away the symbolic and political charge of the month and the struggle.

However, Association 4 argues that Pride Month in June is a corporate invention, and the community must be careful about how it engages with brands:

The idea that June is Pride Month is a corporate invention no more than five years old. The first Prides in Europe started in February, the last ones are in October, and the majority are in July in Europe. I think it's important if the Pride events could have events all year, but it's an easy win for brands. When people shouter brands only put a rainbow logo, I think we have spent 30 years asking these brands to put a rainbow in their logos, and when they started to do it, we started asking why they are doing this. We need to be careful about how we engage with brands. Why would they have a rainbow all year? It makes no sense, but they can engage in other ways.

Association 4 adds that queer imagery might be enough, but it is better if a brand does something more than just using symbolic management and vague messaging:

Yes, it is enough, but it is better if you do more, from publishing a story to promoting an internal event to your employees, for example. But a purely financial

arrangement works for some businesses and Pride, but people are expecting more than just giving money.

Outside Marketer 6 is on the other side of the coin, with strict questions:

You cannot just throw money at us or putting a rainbow flag in June. What else are you doing? What are you doing more substantively?

Activist 15 follows another route, compared to Association 4, and explains that only celebrating Pride and going silent for the rest of the year is not enough, calling it performative:

Doing your thing in June is a ticket box, is performative. It is mandatory to include the employees in the process. Having a rainbow logo during Pride does nothing for the LGBT+ cause. Using queer imagery isn't enough because it might not come with anything else. It is just visual. I am not saying you can't do the rainbows, but let's do it in a much more intentional way.

Outside Marketer 5 amplifies this idea that queer imagery is not enough, as saying Happy Pride is not enough:

If a rainbow is all you do, it feels you are following the crowd but not being meaningful. Companies have to start somewhere, say what it means and why you are doing it. You have to talk about what leadership steps you are taking to engage with our community, internally and externally. So, just saying Happy Pride is not enough.

Participant Other 1 provides a middle-term perspective, saying that is about the amount of visibility:

Visibility is good when you have a lack of visibility. Once you have enough visibility, the power is moving and that's no longer enough, and this is what we are seeing. Companies can work with us to make the world a little bit less awful, to create a better workplace environment.

Activist 10 sees using only queer imagery without substantive actions as an appropriation of the LGBT community's life experiences:

For me, it's using the experience of being LGBT+, which for many people it's a difficult experience, and I don't like it. Are you trying to make the world a better place for LGBT+ people? If yes, great. If not, stop using our symbols.

This angle emphasises the intersection of strategic communication and the LGBT movement, where to join the conversation, brands need to consider: charity, internal support, dialogue about the multi-experience of Queerness, celebrating Pride all year, being purpose-driven, and encouraging change.

5.2.13 The experience and meaning of Pride

The experience and meaning of Pride seem like a multi-experience of Queerness, with Pride Month becoming highly attractive to brands. But why June? Are the Pride Month brands celebrating the same that the LGBT community celebrates?

Pride Month relies upon protests, homages and celebrations without barriers. But does this mean that the history of the LGBT movement is being bleached or powered?

Fight versus Party
Participant Other 1 state:

Pride has gone from riots and protests against police violence and brutality against LGBT+ to this speech on human rights and the sacredness of the individual, and regardless of if you identify or not as an LGBT+ person, you can see yourself as a part of the movement – this is what the mainstem side does. However, becoming more mainstream is one of the accusations as it became more party and less political, and what we see is that many corporations see more the party side of the movement. But throughout the partnership, companies start to see more of this political side of the movement, as they realize there's this other side of the coin, which is fighting for your rights, how internationally the community is still marginalized.

Activist 11 distinguishes Pride from the company's perspective and the activism perspective:

For companies, Pride is a party and an opportunity to make fun at company parties. For activism, it is a demonstration and a fight against discrimination, for rights and acceptance, and for people who can be themselves in their streets.

Activist 2 adds:

Pride will always be a protest to awaken the spirit of protest, rage and dissatisfaction with Queer people. Pride was never about straight people. Pride was always about Queer people saying we will be saying we will collectively bring our voices together and shout.

Association 3 describes it as an assessment to all the conquests throughout the years:

Pride it's a test of fundamental freedoms where Pride happens for the first time. Beyond that, Pride it's creating visibility and representation, celebrating all the achievements the movement conquered, and raising awareness on the issues that still need to change.

5.3.   Results of document analysis

The Workplace Pride UN LGBTI Standards Toolkit document (2021), given by Association 2 (Workplace Pride), was designed to help organizations move from advocacy to action (Appendix 3). Applying this to our research, we would say to move from messaging to practice or from allyship to activism. The toolkit dives into three spheres:

1. Components of engagement with the private sector;

2. Formal partnerships overview;

3. Due diligence framework to tackle discrimination against LGBT people and contribute to positive change.

So, how to use the UN LGBTI Standards is based on four stages: getting started, action planning, good practices, and implementation plan. Each of these four stages corresponds to a different chapter in moving from advocacy to action. Corporations' guidance occurs in four bullet points to increase its maturity approach regarding LGBT issues:

1. Determine where you are today and at which level.

2. Decide which level you aspire to.

3. Select actions with rapid impact and a few which will take longer to implement.

4. Communicate your intent internally and externally.

In other words, the company decided to put the LGBT conversation and inclusion on the agenda and the internal culture, but no concrete plans are in place (yet). Then, the company starts implementing the LGBT inclusion into its day-to-day activities, with management involvement and recognition. This toolkit provides an implementation plan for the five UN LGBTI Standards (respect human rights, eliminate discrimination, provide support, prevent other human rights violations, and act in the public sphere). Also, hands over additional guidance to support organizations' action plan on six topics, namely:

- Sensitive countries.
- Alignment with other initiatives.
- Measurement and reporting.

- Acting in the public sphere.
- Business communication plan.
- Additional resources.

Drawing from the UN LGBT Standards toolkit and going to the Declaration of Amsterdam for an LGBT Inclusive Workplace, also given by Association 2, we gathered call-to-actions regarding employers to create an inclusive work culture by country, including:

- Provide a safe workplace and promote authenticity for LGBT employees.
- Support leaders and decision-makers that strive to create LGBT-inclusive working environments.
- Support the improvement of working environments for LGBT employees in all the countries where they are active.

On the other hand, ILGA-Europe, Association 3, provided us with a relevant and confidential document about the guidelines to move forward with partnerships and collaborations with the private sector. The insights from this document are in the discussion chapter, but without identifying it, as requested by our interviewee. In another one, the 'Partnerships for LGBTI equality' report, ILGA-Europe identifies different ways of collaborating with the private sector, from sponsorship to joint campaigns to fundraising led by LGBT+ staff networks.

Considering the corporate language of Association 15, REDI, goals such as company visibility (awareness) and an inclusive culture are pointed out as positive outcomes of a private sector committed to the LGBT community equality. The 'LGBT+ Inclusion at Work 2022: A Global Outlook' by Deloitte, provides three recommendations about LGBT+ inclusion at work:

1. Enable employees to be out at work with clear messaging, leaders walking the talk, and visible actions of support for LGBT+ inclusion, internally and externally;

2. Do not tolerate non-inclusive behaviour with clear messaging, commitment and action from leaders about what behaviours to expect; and

3. Embrace the power of vocal allyship from non-LGBT+ colleagues to enable LGBT+ inclusion at work.

CHAPTER 6

6. Discussion

This chapter starts by verifying the research propositions and conceptualising our results from the previous literature review. Then, we go back to our initial conceptual model to develop a new one with new insights. The contextualisation of research findings supports the discussion phase, as we have an exploratory lens. Thus, we generate context-dependent knowledge through a qualitative approach.

6.1.   Discussing the five research propositions

Drawing from the abductive research approach, we explored our research propositions and conceptual model through the above results, connected with our point of departure: the existing literature and theory. Hence, we scrutinized each one of the research propositions hand-by-hand with the initial conceptual model.

6.1.1   Proposition 1

P1: Corporate LGBT messaging and advocacy to publicize corporate practices and policies potentially contribute to the necessary legitimacy for brands to become activists that successfully join the LGBT conversation during Pride month.

We conducted an in-depth, systematic exploration of the participant's experiences to explore "insider's" perspectives" (Deshpande, 1983: p. 103) and understand if there is a continuing exchange of shared meanings over time through brand legitimacy.

Proposition 1 scrutinizes step one regarding brands joining the LGBT conversation: having something to say to create and share corporate LGBT messaging and advocacy (walk the talk and talk the walk). And having something to say connects to initiatives such as corporate practices and policies regarding their LGBT employees. Outside Marketer 7 (Partner and Senior Director at LLYC, Mexico) mirrors Proposition 1 foundations by declaring:

Companies that are not saying anything throughout the year because they don't have anything to say are not doing anything inside the company that it's relevant. In my experience, when companies don't communicate, normally it's not because they don't want to communicate, but it's because they have nothing to say.

This statement has one relevant starting point: companies already assumed they want to take a public stand (regularly or punctually) regarding LGBT issues. Proposition 1 relates to the following typology: Internal Support (workplace dimension). Table 19 shows that the internal support typology never hits at least half of the Pride campaign actions under analysis. In 2021, 45% of brands communicated internal support with different approaches (as explained below). In 2022, only 30% of the brands did it.

Table 19. Internal Support representativeness in 2021 and 2022 Pride campaigns

	Internal Support
2021 Pride campaigns	9 = 45%
2022 Pride campaigns	6 = 30%

The eight typologies scrutinise brands' efforts regarding the LGBT cause while combining messaging and actions, or intangible and tangible positionings, and how they are (or are not) becoming activists, overpassing the allyship status or market positioning. We connect the proper typologies to their respective propositions throughout the discussion chapter.

Returning to Proposition 1 and analysing it through the lens of the fifth typology developed in the code structure of this research, the following question arises: How are brands communicating this support from the inside out?

- Promoting diversity and inclusion as core values and part of the internal culture and brand identity. E.g., PUMA.
- Promoting internal events and providing internal resources for external initiatives. E.g., Mercedes-Benz and Abercrombie & Fitch.
- Sharing internal achievements and distinctions, such as being one of the best places to work for the LGBT+ community. E.g., Pantone.
- Sharing the support and commitment of unequivocal initiatives focused on the workplace dimension, such as UN Free & Equal standards of conduct for business. E.g., L'Oréal Paris.

- Elevating LGBT+ employees' stories through their marketing channels or putting LGBT+ employees in the spotlight. E.g., Farfetch, Levi's and L'Oréal Paris.
- Emphasising the health and engagement of LGBT employee advocacy groups in Pride initiatives. E.g., Lego.
- Sharing guidelines and toolkits to help other companies to make their workplaces more inclusive. E.g., The Body Shop.

Implementing internal support policies and communicating them may allow brands to conquer more legitimacy to encourage real-lasting positive change, be purpose-driven, move from allyship to activism, and become relevant in the LGBT+ movement worldwide or locally. Muniz et al. (2019) claim that companies must communicate their CSR initiatives to consumers to create or reinforce awareness. In other words, companies need internal initiatives to promote them externally. This LGBT brand communication might contribute to the brand's legitimacy to become an activist (recalling Proposition 4 and Proposition 5). These initiatives are relevant as they feed the brand-community engagement concept (Aksoy et al. 2013).

We can explore Proposition 1 in the following structure: LGBT brand communication demands internal initiatives, which help companies increase their legitimacy capital to join the LGBT conversation, authentically celebrate Pride and move from allyship to activism.

Our conceptual model highlights the importance of sharing meanings and going beyond messaging to join the conversation. Literature allowed us to identify six must-haves of intrinsically motivated brands: (1) charity; (2) internal support; (3) dialogue about the multi-experience of Queerness; (4) celebrating Pride all year; (5) being purpose-driven; and (6) encouraging change.

These six elements are a 360º formula for brands to join the conversation given by the literature. Then, we mixed these six elements with the UN LGBTI Standards (respect human rights, eliminate discrimination, provide support, prevent other human rights violations, and act in the public sphere) to explore how brands and companies can start advocating, reaching the allyship status and evolve to the activist market positioning (moving from messaging to action).

Proposition 1 is about putting the LGBT conversation on the company agenda and internal culture and moving to concrete plans. According to the *Workplace Pride UN LGBTI Standards Toolkit* provided by Workplace Pride, there are four stages in the private sector engagement with the LGBT community: getting started, action planning, good practices, and implementation plan. Communicating the intent internally and externally is among the guidelines provided to increase the company's maturity regarding LGBT issues or, in our words, to gain the necessary legitimacy for brands to join the LGBT conversation all year and during Pride month. Also, the toolkit emphasises the relevance of understanding the current approach, deciding the level the company aspires to, and selecting two types of actions: ones with rapid impact and a few that will take longer to implement.

Regarding the actions with rapid impact and drawing from the academic understanding of brand activism, we highlight the mission of increasing awareness and visibility. For the ones that will take longer to implement, we identify the purpose of encouraging social-political and behavioural change, which is context-sensitive. Following the Spanish association REDI documents, the unit of analysis 6 (document analysis), awareness and inclusive work cultures are not only actions to improve companies' legitimacy but are also positive outcomes of a private sector committed to the LGBT community equality.

As CSR gives businesses the responsibility to contribute to the welfare of society and stakeholders while pursuing their economic goals, corporate LGBT messaging and advocacy may be a way of demanding internal coherence, as identified by Inside Marketer 3 (Global Head of Activism at The Body Shop, UK):

> *The work inside the company reflects what we are saying on the outside.*

The six elements sustain this perspective, which recalls Schallehn *et al.* (2014) definition of authenticity as continuity and consistency with the purpose and values of a corporation. Miguel and Miranda (2023) also argue that consistency is crucial for effectiveness, highlighting the relevance of being sincere about how brands address the issue and contribute to the cause. Internal policies may promote this public position. Association 1 (Chair of The Board of Trustees at Schools OUT UK) assert:

> *Companies have to do the work with their staff while you do the work externally. This genuine engagement gets reflected in business ethos. (…) If your brand is*

saying one thing and your ethos is saying another message, it's never telling the same.

Communicating LGBT-inclusive policies for Inside Marketer 4 requires inclusiveness as a structural part of the brand and not just as a value. Communication shows the company's path but is not the path for itself. Or, as Association 9 argues (Vice President at GLAAD Media Institute, USA), communication demands concrete and substantive words:

The corporation must understand how it operationalizes that public declaration and what that is going to look like. It might be collaborations with local activists, it might be partnerships with advocacy organizations in different forms, and there is also recruiting and enhancing talent.

What Association 9 said is what Ashforth and Gibbs (1990) claim as substantive and symbolic management for pragmatic and moral legitimacy (Soobaroyen & Ntim, 2013).

Substantive management demands internal change and external commitment, from inclusive policies to the subscription and adoption of business standards and certifications. Newson and Deegan (2002) emphasise the relevance of communicating this commitment to change and societal issues. The appearance matches the actions, and actions are the deal.

Symbolic management relates to performative allyship and aims to project the appearance of brands fully aligned with a community's expectations, values, and needs. Usually, there is a lack of tangible actions, with a prevalence of vague messaging and the adoption of shared symbols. Brands create compelling storytelling, where rhetoric is the real deal, demanding several internal calls to action for companies committed to promoting and creating inclusive workplaces locally. The *Declaration of Amsterdam*, for instance, describes inclusive work cultures as those that provide a safe workplace, promote authenticity for LGBT employees, support the management that strives to create LGBT-inclusive working environments (as claimed by Inside DEI Manager 5) and fulfil this commitment in all countries where the company is active. Communicating the intent of being an ally of LGBT issues or going over this intent and sharing the support without a concrete plan may generate accusations of hypocrisy and pinkwashing (Clements, 2017). Properly joining the conversation is then mandatory, and not only doing symbolic and substantive actions. Participant Other 2 (CEO at The Inclusion Imperative, Canada) adds:

Pinkwashing is an organization that wants to be seen as LGBT+ inclusive but doesn't do enough work to be LGBT+ inclusive. It just wants to world to think it is. Organizations are tempted to be just very visible, with the rainbow logos, instead of getting into changing their culture.

Participant Other 1 (Postdoctoral Researcher at Copenhagen Business School, Denmark) identifies corporate policies such as parental leave for employees and family constatations globally to avoid pinkwashing and show that the company is walking the talking.

We would add that this will contribute to having the legitimacy to celebrate Pride month.

The truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation is more than a match between symbolic and substantive management. It is more than communication or action. It is the conjunctions of several parts, as it is a starting point to review and develop our initial conceptual model, considering three sources:

- Literature review insights for brands genuinely joining the LGBT conversation.
- The UN LGBTI Standards for Business.
- Deloitte's Outlook on the LGBT+ Inclusion at Work 2022.

This circuit is about activist brands' efforts and influences brands' positioning in the LGBT context. We explain it in Figure 8, with seven touchpoints, from the willingness to join the conversation to becoming or intrinsically being purpose-driven.

Figure 8. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation.

Willingness to take part in the conversation.

Corporate messaging and advocacy or activist marketing messaging (internally and externally).

Brand identity, purpose (prosocial), values, motivation, and stakeholders' preferences.

C-level alignment and involvement.

Selection of the controversial social or political issue to address.

Actionable plan with short-term and long-term prosocial corporate actions and outcomes, including internal support.

Purpose and values-driven.

This circuit gives guidelines to create a potential authentic commitment to LGBT change and acceptance as brands become moral actors that promote legal, economic, social, political, or environmental reforms, heightening positive moral emotions, as Wannow, Haupt and Ohlwein (2023) study suggests. The circuit is under construction and will be complete after we finish analysing and discussing the four missing propositions. Brands may be closer to conquering the necessary legitimacy to join the LGBT conversation if considering these seven touchpoints, which are also relevant to start diving into moving from allyship to activism within the LGBT context. But why is legitimacy so important? Only by having legitimacy do brands have the potential to become authentic activists and successfully join the LGBT conversation during Pride month or all year. Time-space is crucial to understand the relevance of legitimacy. Seen as a component of authenticity (Nunes et al. 2021) and as the social fit of the brand with communities shared norms (Kates, 2004), legitimacy is measured through the social fitness of brands to become LGBT activists. Winning legitimacy is long-term oriented and occurs through brand efforts. Additionally, legitimacy allows us to communicate change without seeming exploitative, according to participant Outside Marketer 8 (Executive Creative Director and Partner at Uzina, Portugal), who declares:

I can give the example of Ikea, a brand we work with at UZINA. Ikea has a tradition of featuring LGBT+ couples in its advertising, Pride, but before Ikea talks about this subject. There is an advertising purpose of trying to represent the reality, but there is a legitimacy related to them practising within their home.

With the concept of legitimacy comes the birth of expectations. The targeted audiences, the internal stakeholders, the LGBT community, and the digital communities, among others, develop expectations about brands spreading activist messaging and positionings. By fulfilling expectations, brands may increase their legitimacy and the questions that arise related to how to address these expectations. Activists and outside marketers expect a flow from the inside to the outside. Activist 2 (Human Rights ARTivist, Botswana) clarifies:

I expect that they are internally supporting and making sure LGBTQ people within their systems are getting access to a dignified life because it would be ridiculous for them if they say that they want everyone to get a dignified life but don't care about their employees.

Associations expect dialogue, collaboration and continuity. In the general picture, there is the expectation of fighting against prejudice, being authentic, taking risks, joining the conversation with symbolic and substantive actions, conquering pragmatic and moral legitimacies, and taking public stands for the LGBT+ cause to provoke tangible changes. More than doing the bare minimum and communicating it with fireworks, there is the demand for getting connected, talking about LGBT people's lives, and recognising the victories and the good, but also the bad, the challenges, and the rights and freedoms still to be won. Spreading the word, increasing visibility, giving resources, taking public stands, using their influence, and participating in the improvement of the LGBT community life are summarised in the following statement by Association 7 (President of the Board at ILGA Portugal, Portugal):

Dialogue, that brands reach out to associations and communities; understand their projects and needs; understand that beyond the rainbow flag, there are social problems, celebrations of love and resistance; and identify what matters to LGBT+ people and where they can contribute.

Therefore, we add a new touchpoint to the circuit: fulfil expectations. This new element arises as expectations and legitimacy are holding hands in the complex process of companies and brands engaging with the LGBT community through marketing. Association 9 (Vice President at GLAAD Media Institute, USA) puts it effortlessly:

> *Marketing must represent something real.*

Figure 9. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 2].
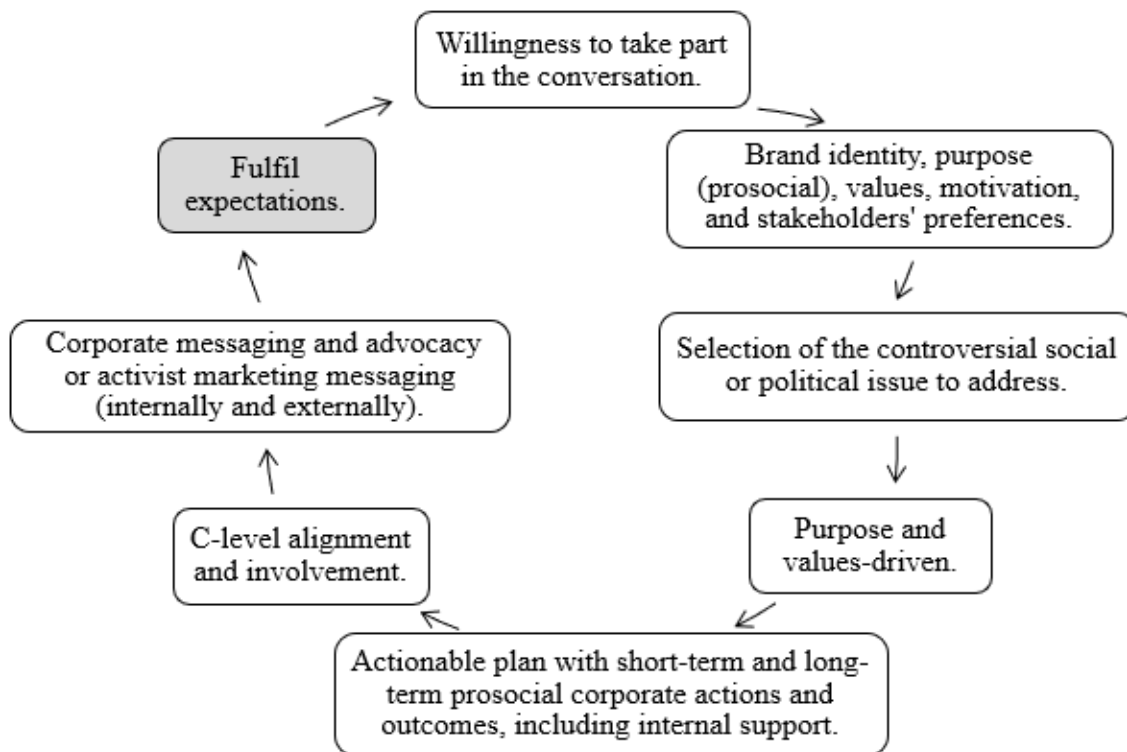
Expectations are in Proposition 3 as influencing brands' access to allyship and activism positioning. Thus, the research further explores this idea when analysing Proposition 3.

6.1.2   Proposition 2

P2: Rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns (Queer imagery) are instruments to support LGBT people, promoting the conversation about the LGBT cause and increasing awareness.

The question underlying Proposition 2 is if slapping rainbows on the brand's logos, launching Pride collections and sharing rainbow-themed marketing campaigns is allyship, activism, or exploitation. Rephrasing this question, Proposition 2 rambles about brands'

access to allyship and activism within the LGBT context and through Pride marketing campaigns. To provide answers, we collected secondary data from 20 brands (see Table 11). This first step allowed us to scan brand activist strategies targeting transparency and authenticity. In 2021, brands like C&A, PUMA, Farfetch, Happy Socks, and Havaianas launched Pride campaigns. One year later, some of them released new campaigns, and some of them went silent. Are these brands devoted significant resources to the LGBT conversation? Queer imagery is one of the eight typology categories applied to the 2021 and 2022 Pride campaigns. It has three pillars: rainbow-themed campaigns, rainbow logos, and Pride collections. Its use refers to applying the rainbow or Pride flag in one or more items, from logos to collections and campaigns.

85% of brands applied the rainbow or Pride flag to communicate their Pride marketing efforts (N=17, excluding Danone Portugal, Farfetch and Ikea) in 2021 (see Table 20). 70% of brands applied the rainbow or Pride flag to communicate their Pride marketing efforts (N=14, excluding Crate and Barrel, Danone Portugal, Farfetch, Ikea, and Patagonia) in 2022 (Table 20).

Table 20. Queer Imagery representativeness in 2021 and 2022 Pride campaigns

	Rainbow campaign	Rainbow logo	Pride collection	Total
2021 Pride campaigns	17 = 85%	6 = 30%	12 = 60%	85%
2022 Pride campaigns	14 = 70%	6 = 30%	11 = 55%	75%

From the literature review, Queer Imagery arises as symbolic management to conquer legitimacy and join the LGBT conversation and belongs to the public dimension of the UN LGBTI standards. Our empirical findings from secondary data reveal Queer Imagery is among the most popular typologies in the 2021 and 2022 campaigns, and rainbow-themed campaigns are the most frequent element of queer imagery composition. This popularity might occur because launching a rainbow-themed campaign defines the next communication steps, from slapping a rainbow in the logo to creating Pride merchandise and working with the community (bringing other typologies such as product orientation, collaborations and partnerships, and engagement with the community to analyse

Proposition 2). Also, our findings suggest multiple patterns in how brands are storytelling their engagement with the LGBT community, namely:

- The messaging speaks to the LGBT+ community. E.g., "Celebrate with the ones who make you feel loved " (Abercrombie & Fitch), "Change continues with you. The voice you use. The way you dress. Your very existence" (Levi's), "Wherever you shave, shave with Pride" (Harrys), and "Orgulho de caminhar com você" (Havaianas).

- Focus on the colourful and celebratory side of Pride and Pride month.

- Lack of visibility to the combative side of Pride. Lack of actionable words such as allyship, advocacy, and activism, with a few exceptions, namely: "We believe that being an ally to the LGBT+ community is not something that can be switched on and off when suitable" (Happy Socks), and "LBGT+ Employee advocacy groups did activities for employees, such as Drag Queen Story Time" (Lego).

- The tone has a manifesto positioning, with brands' efforts to mobilise their communities.

- The messages associate brands associate with targeted values, as they gravitate around words such as togetherness, love, equality, diversity, security, acceptance, liberty, and visibility. This allows brands to share different but similar inspiring stories, call-to-actions, and positionings. E.g., "From PUMA with Love" (PUMA), "To make sure that everyone can be seen and heard in their most authentic light whilst" (The Body Shop), "Everyone Different. All Equal" (Mercedes-Benz), "We Belong Together" (Abercrombie & Fitch), and "Love Transforms" (Levi's).

- 'Pride' or 'Orgulho' are words widely used to spread the message and associate the brand with the targeted audience's values. For instance, "Always Walk with Pride" (Happy Socks), "Cookie Kits celebrating Pride", and "Work in Pride Charter" (The Body Shop).

- There is an overlapping of Pride messages and Pride collections. The campaigns go from honouring the first Pride to promoting the new limited-edition jacket or walking with Pride by having Pride socks.

- The message highlights the efforts to contribute to a better world, potentially achieving a stronger emotional connection with the targeted audience. Examples include donations from sales of the Pride collections (100% or a smaller

percentage), collaborations with LGBT+ associations and community members, tips to be a better ally and all-time contributions to the LGBT+ community.

- Brands prefer vague messaging instead of showing what they are actively doing to help the LGBT+ community. The tendency of brands campaigning for LGBT rights finds echoes in messages related to using the brand's channels to provide more space for queer visibility (Happy Socks and L'Oréal Paris), join Pride events and promote internal activities throughout LGBT+ employee groups (Lego), or make the promise that the brand will walk the talk all year and not only during Pride Month (Happy Socks).

These nine patterns also work as suggestions for better LGBT messages during Pride month and all year. As Proposition 2 questions if Queer Imagery is allyship, activism, or exploitation, Galan-Ladero (2013) gives insightful guidelines about moving from allyship status to activism mode, which must include elements such as type of donation, who pays it, number of products, corporations and associations involved, duration, geographical scope, cause supported, and the media used. Our findings follow one clear direction: to join the LGBT conversation, brands must consider exchange branches: charity, internal support, dialogue about the multi-experience of Queerness, celebrating Pride all year, positioning as purpose-driven, and encouraging change. All these elements support the idea that brand activism goes beyond messaging and must ensure coherence between message and practice. Why?

Consumers are sceptical regarding rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns (Li, 2022) as brands move from placing advertisements in LGBT media and launching marketing campaigns with LGBT+ representativeness to take public stands.

In 2021, 60% of the brands (N=12) launched Pride collections. In 2022, 55% of the brands (N=11) launched Pride collections during June. What are the approaches regarding quantity? We have three approaches: limited-edition collections, one-single products, and large collections. Regarding availability, we have collections available all year or for a limited time. Our results show that C&A launched the topmost collection in terms of quantity in both Pride campaigns. Co-creations are not expressive, with Abercrombie as the only brand with a collection developed with The Trevor Project. Also, our results show

that we might launch new collections or repurpose old ones by adding new items to existing pieces or changing the existing ones.

Related to these results, 65% of brands (N=13, Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Happy Socks, Harrys, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, L'Oréal Paris, Mercedes-Benz, Pantone, Polo Club, and PUMA) in 2021 launched Pride campaign with product orientation. In 2022, 65% of brands (N=13, The Body Shop, PUMA, Mercedes-Benz, Lego, Confections, Havaianas, Harrys, Happy Socks, Farfetch, Levi's, C&A and Abercrombie & Fitch) also launched campaigns in June with a product orientation core. These findings mean rainbow-themed campaigns merchandising rainbow colours in June in a slippery turn to pinkwashing, as Activist 12 (LGBTQIAP+ independent activist, Brazil) explains if it is the only thing brands do all year. Our findings show a predominance of rainbow goods with a storytelling base, aiming to contribute to the legitimacy of brands to celebrate Pride. This tangible action is the starting point for financial (donations) and intangible exchanges (advocacy groups).

The pattern our results emphasise is the use of products as a tangible tool dressed up with aspirational messages and inspirational rainbow campaigns. The commercial and performative meet the motivational Pride with call-to-actions such as Shop the link in our bio (Levi's), Get yours online now at www.poloclub.com (Polo Club), Shopping our products (Happy Socks), and Forever Free collection is available on online and in @puma_nyc (PUMA).

Product orientation refers to a marketplace dimension including Pride collections and influencing all the accessories, from donations to messages and collaborations. Our findings assert the connection between Queer Imagery, product orientation, pride collections, and rainbow campaigns. This connection has several layers, including:

1. To celebrate Pride every day, all year round.

2. To collect resources to help LGBT+ associations, NGOs and services through donations and sponsorship.

3. As homages to LGBT+ voices and faces.

4. To celebrate LGBT+ and Pride symbols.

5. To celebrate Pride.

6. To raise awareness and visibility of specific LGBT+ causes.

7. As a storytelling strategy to promote products.

8. To promote the heritage owned by the brand and their efforts to fight against discrimination.

Consumers condemn inauthentic activist brands (Moorman, 2020; Vredenburg et al. 2020) with polarised reactions that go from scepticism to boycotts (Schmidt et al. 2022; Xu and Zhoub, 2020). In other words, Queer Imagery are an instrument with different roles and effects depending on different scenarios and contexts. Our findings suggest two relevant plots.

<u>Scenario 1</u>
Scenario 1 is Instrumental Support: Queer Imagery is isolated, as it is the only action the brand does all year to join the LGBT conversation. This scenario is fertile for scepticism, rooted in intrinsically commercial support and the performative use of Queer Imagery: a brand shows its support symbolically without engaging in further support (Champlin & Li, 2020; Clements, 2017).

Association 7 (President of the Board at ILGA Portugal, Portugal) sees June as the beginning of the path to transform Pride into an instrument for achieving a goal, stealing years of revindication and public space with no return, and potentially removing the symbolic and political charge of the month and the struggle. Our findings identify perspectives in opposite directions. Association 4 (Board Member at European Pride Organisers Association, Denmark) argues Pride Month in June is a corporate invention and Queer Imagery might be enough (but it would be better if companies go further):

> *When people shouter brands only put a rainbow logo, I think we have spent 30 years asking these brands to put a rainbow in their logos, and when they started to do it, we started asking why they are doing this. We need to be careful about how we engage with brands. Why would they have a rainbow all year? It makes no sense, but they can engage in other ways.*

Scenario 2

Scenario 2 is Holistic Support: Queer Imagery is one piece of the circuit to join the LGBT conversation or celebrate Pride during June. Symbols are not enough for change. We identify insights for brands thinking about celebrating Pride:

1. Throwing money or putting a rainbow flag in June is not enough (Outside Marketer 6 - Communications Director, National LGBTQ Task Force/Principal at Target Cue, USA). Make one question: What else are you doing, or will you be doing more substantively?

2. Celebrating Pride and being silent all year is not enough. It is performative and a ticket box (Activist 15 – protected identity). Path: include the employees in the process.

3. Saying Happy Pride is not enough (Outside Marketer 5 - Founder and Principal at The Change Agencies, USA). Path: instead of using Queer Imagery as the baby step of joining the LGBT conversation, companies could explain why they want to join and what it means to them. To do this, share the steps the C-level (or the leadership) takes to engage with the LGBT community.

4. It is about the visibility index (participant Other 1 - Postdoctoral Researcher at Copenhagen Business School, Denmark). Visibility is good when there is a lack of visibility. However, when visibility grows, it is no longer enough and demands more tangible actions. Path: implement policies and programs to create better workplace environments.

5. Understand, share, respect, and celebrate Queer multi-experiences. Activist 10 (Writer and campaigner focussed on LGBT+ rights and anti-racism, UK) describes the isolated use of LGBT symbols as an appropriation of the LGBT people's life experiences. Make one question: Are you trying to make the world a better place for LGBT+ people?

The look and voice of brand allies and brand activists

Our findings are relevant as academics and practitioners know little about how brands explore the strengths and weaknesses of the LGBT community. There is a lack of information on how marketing generates new opportunities and risks for the LGBT

community, increasing the need to study the nexus between LGBT movements, corporations and brands, allyship and activism. Using LGBT symbols without substantive actions is questionable, as it won't make the world a better place for the LGBT community. Thus, the private sector must produce meaning and create discourses for social change (Ciszek, 2017), becoming strategic social agents (Schoenberger-Orgad, 2011). But what do [brand] allies and [brand] activists look like? Considering UN Human Rights Office (2017) standards for becoming activists' brands must stand up for human rights where they do business, provide a positive workplace environment, prevent human rights violations, and act in the public and political sphere. Queer Imagery isn't enough, increasing the risks of being interpreted as rainbow-washing or instrumental use of LGBT symbols.

Thinking about the appearance and voice of brand allies and activists is to recognise the existence of different forms of taking stands on LGBT issues and heterogenous efforts to provoke or contribute to social change, reinforcing the importance of developing an issue-centric framework through TIU research. Our findings suggest it is vital to listen to and engage with the LGBT community and civil society, locally and globally (see, understand, and act triad). Listening and engaging is a mandatory step, independently of the goal: conquering the allyship status or evolving to activist positioning. Brands must go beyond symbolism and do more than the bare minimum to connect with the community. The corporate world and the marketing strategy difficulty is understanding the challenges of the LGBT community in the various geographical scopes. Our findings reveal four specific substantial challenges:

1. Get a balance between visibility, real progress and misinformation (Activist 2 - Human Rights ARTivist, Botswana).

2. To provide an inclusive education and school for everyone (Association 1 - Chair of The Board of Trustees at Schools OUT UK, UK).

3. Pride Health (Association 4 - Board Member at European Pride Organisers Association, Denmark). Around 60% of Pride movements are in Europe, showing the health of Pride in Europe and the unhealth of Pride in other parts of the globe.

4. Clarify Queerness is not a Western trend (Activist 6 - protected identity). This challenge is contextual-sensible. It is also an appeal to companies to think about

how they engage. Participant claims the best way is to finance and provide technical support.

Appendix 4 includes more challenges for brands and the community. We added a new touchpoint to emphasise the need to listen to the community locally and globally.

Figure 10. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 3].
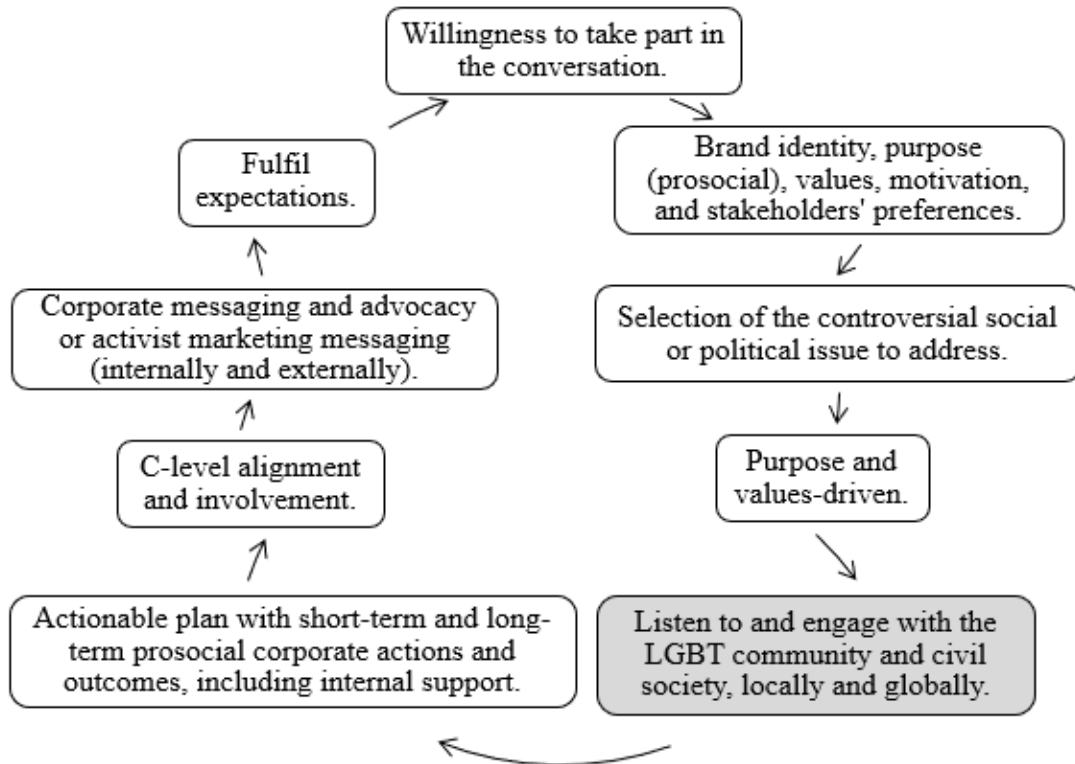
To build an allyship status and move to an activist positioning, is it necessary to have local plans with a global vision? Is adopting a public activist positioning in the UK but not in Saudi Arabia still brand activism?

Our results reveal a unanimous opinion: brands must address local needs, but it is not part of the brand's role to defy governments. Ikea has only one guideline to avoid conflicts with the governments of countries where being gay is illegal, according to Inside Marketer 2 (Ikea Country Communication Manager, Portugal):

> *Overall, the only indication is that we don't talk about these issues in places where it's illegal because we don't override the law. Even where it is illegal, we have public affairs work, liaising with governments, which is more subtle but happens to*

have an impact on what could be a change in the law, for example. We're not interested in open wars with governments.

Outside Marketer 2 (Head of Strategy at Fuel Lisbon, Portugal) argues that brands have the legitimacy of not being so vocal in more conservative countries.

The fact that brands are such an active force in progressive countries and don't do so in markets where the issue is still taboo means that Ikea has made a legitimate decision not to make this cause a battlefront because I don't know if that's its role either (...)

This unanimous perspective raises one new question: Is it possible to be an activist without taking risks? Outside Marketer 2 refines this doubt:

For me, an activist defends their battle with the same force in a favourable or unfavourable civil society. It's someone who doesn't keep quiet and who fights. I don't know if brands fight because they must ensure it doesn't have a negative reaction. The majority of civil society has to be ready to accept it.

The geographical scope becomes a new aspect marketing strategic plans must consider. Hence, we add a new touchpoint: the geographical scope of corporate actions. Outside Marketer 7 (Partner and Senior Director at LLYC, Mexico) explains:

If a brand celebrates Pride, that is not activism. But if you are celebrating in Saudi Arabia, it could be activism, as it can be dangerous to the brand (...).

Figure 11. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 4].
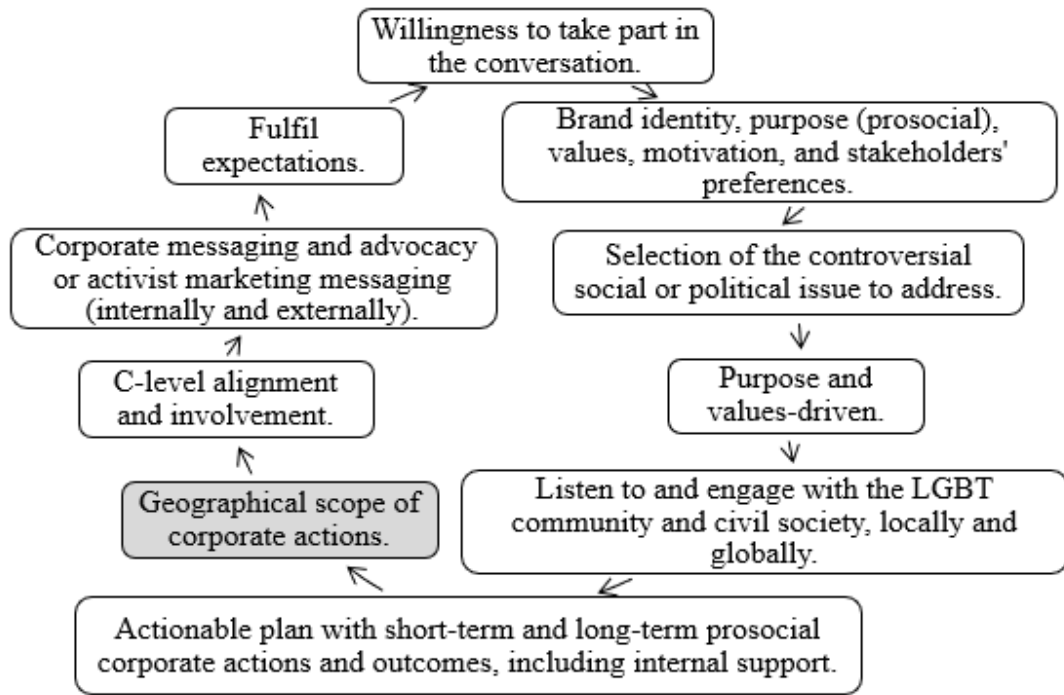
Listening and engaging with the LGBT community and the geographical scope create the conditions to include LGBT facts in Pride campaigns.

Communicating LGBT facts is part of purpose-driven brands focused on promoting the dialogue about the experience of Queerness. 25% of brands utilise LGBT to celebrate and mark LGBT Pride Month (N=5, Levi's, Crate and Barrel, Farfetch, Happy Socks, and The Body Shop) in 2021 (Table 21). In 2022, it was only 10% of brands (N=2, Harrys and Havaianas).

Table 21. LGBT Facts representativeness in 2021 and 2022 Pride campaigns

	LGBT Facts
2021 Pride campaigns	5 = 25%
2022 Pride campaigns	2 = 10%

Our findings identify several approaches to LGBT facts, including:

1. History: Honour the first Pride: The Stonewall Rebellion of 1969. - Levi's.

2. Share the story of popular Queer symbols worldwide: the Pride Flag. "In 1977, Harvey Milk challenged Gilbert Baker to come up with a symbol of pride for the

gay community. The Pride Flag, inspired by Judy Garland's "Over the Rainbow," flew at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade celebration on June 25, 1978." - Crate and Barrel.

3. Newsworthy facts: 'Near the end of 2020, the world watched Nigerian youth collectively bear their anger and shout together: "END SARS" - Farfetch.

4. The objections and threats the LGBT+ community still faces: "In 68 countries, homosexuality is considered a crime." – Happy Socks

5. Overview of LGBT+ community lives in the brand's domestic markets.

Our findings distinguish instrumental from calculative, as Queer Imagery might be more calculative than instrumental if we see it as a baby step to join the conversation or a tool to achieve specific goals.

Making this separation is relevant as instrumental typically has a manipulative side that can put Queer Imagery as wrong for brands when the question is the context that will define the authenticity and legitimacy of brands to appropriate LGBT symbols to join LGBT conversations.

This circuit avoids pinkwashing. Why is this relevant for marketing? As Activist 12 explains:

> *Defend us, and be the allies we need. They might be just producing rainbow goods and collecting money during Pride month. Displaying rainbow colours is not enough. We see it as rainbow capitalism, a turn-off.*

Figure 12. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 5].
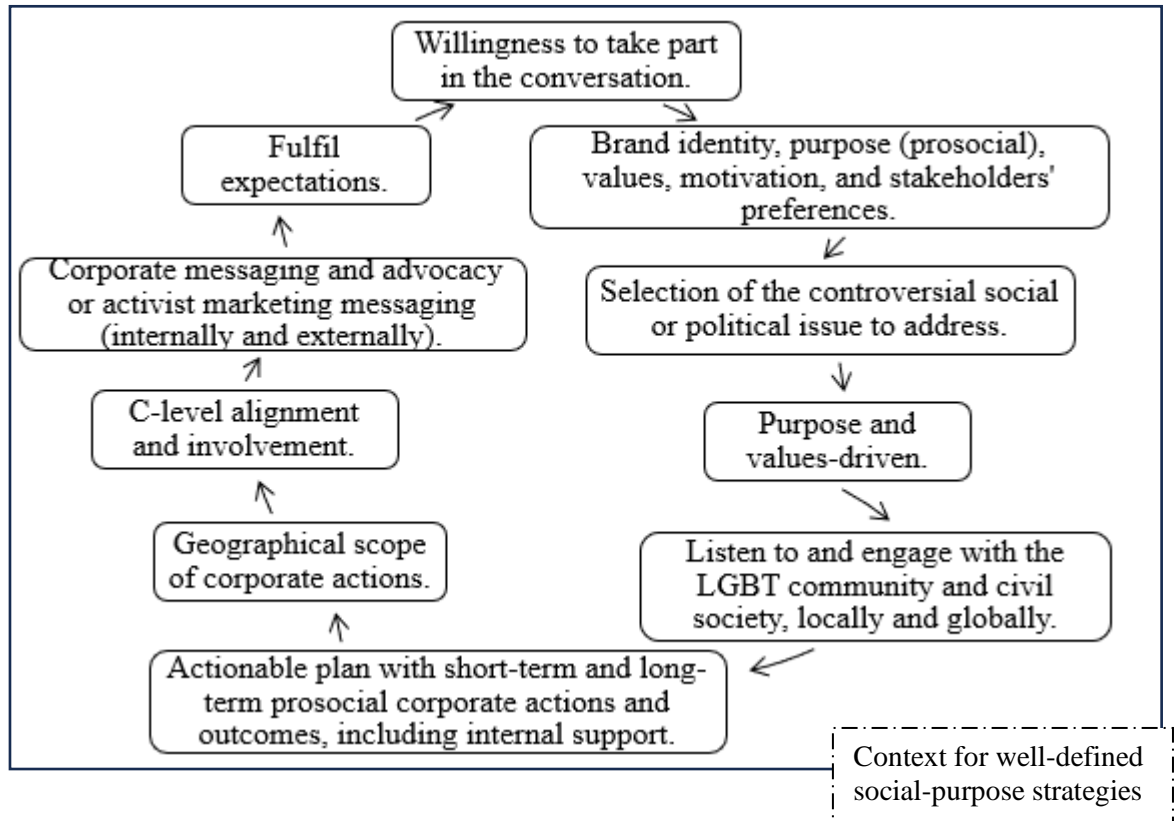
To finish, we must consider the importance of the timing directive. What does this mean? As symbolic management (Queer Imagery) is not as powerful as it was at the end of the 20th century, substantive management is necessary for brands to join the LGBT conversation, as Association 5 (Executive Director at GiveOut, UK) explains:

> *Big businesses marching in Pride in London and using the rainbow flag is not as strong as it was. When they did 20 years ago, that was symbolic. It could have a significant impact in terms of people feeling they would be welcomed in those businesses, contributing to changing attitudes. So, the context is sensible. If a bank puts a rainbow flag in one of its windows in London, does that make a big difference now? Probably not. If a bank does this in Kenya, it might have a huge impact.*

Consequently, we must add a new directive to Figure 13: Timing. This directive refers not only to the use of LGBT symbols in time but also to when brands join the conversation, influencing how the 'rainbowfication' of brands occurs through the marketing and commercial use of global symbols of the LGBT community.

Figure 13. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 6].

Figure 13. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 6].
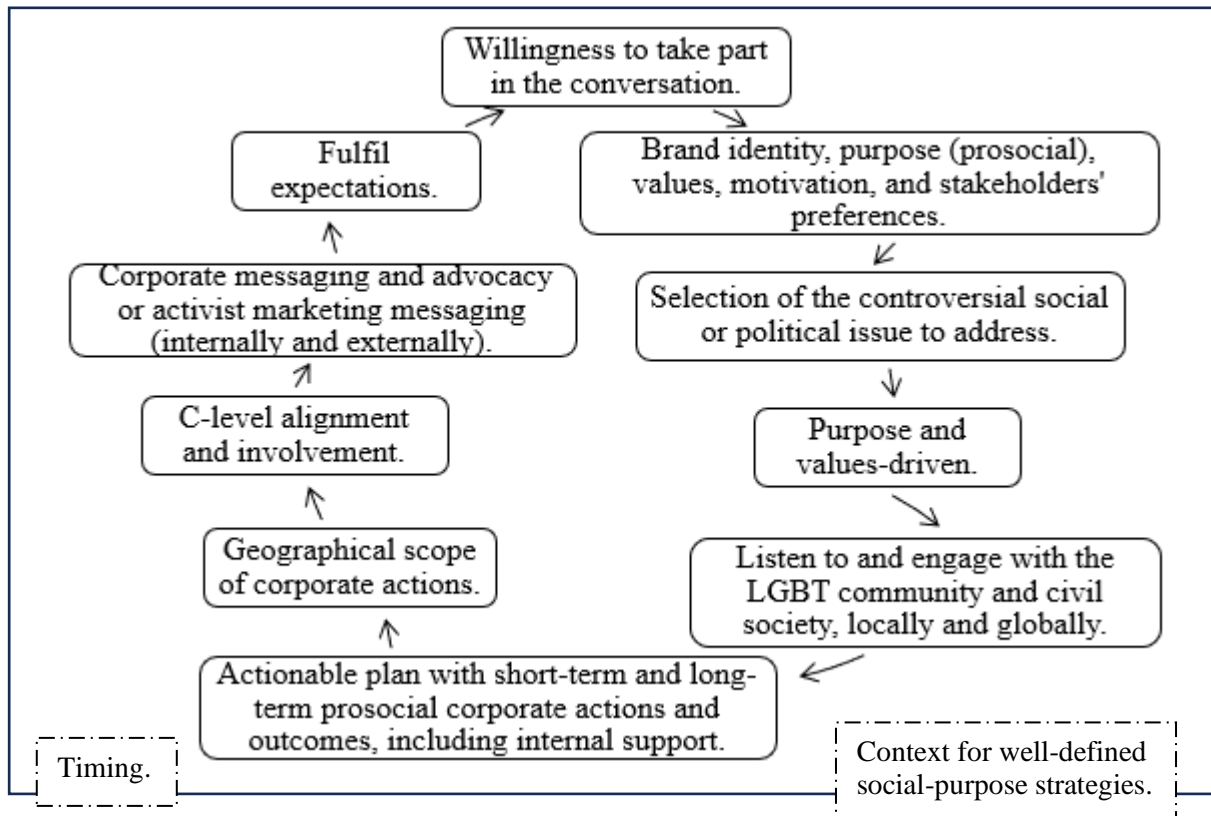
6.1.3 Proposition 3

P3: The popularity of LGBT issues and the societal expectations from the brands positively affect the brands' willingness to take public stands for the causes, moving from allyship to activism.

Brands' functional benefits are no longer enough to sustain the relationship between a company and a consumer (Salzer-Mörling & Strannegård, 2007; Schmidt et al. 2022). Consequently, a brand's willingness to act with purpose, take public stands for polarised issues, and, when necessary, make the leap into activism results from a new paradigm where society calls businesses to help solve societal problems (Porter & Kramer, 2011) and consumer's purchases reflect brands decisions about being vocal or being silent.

The adherence of brands to the activism bandwagon gives a new status quo to brands, namely: allies, advocates and activists. Despite brand activists existing since century XX, it

is now that brands are getting more involved in socio-political issues via CSR and related phenomena (Weber et al. 2023).

Brands are now sources of activism (Ball, 2019; Zhou, 2021) within the LGBT movement, and Pride Month is conquering growing interest among marketing campaigns (Hydock et al. 2020).

Citizens demand that brands positively contribute to social outcomes. However, the new bond between brands and consumers is also about consumers demanding transparent and authentic commitment to social issues, no matter if brands are allies or make the leap to activism.

Ahmad et al. (2022) determines the stakeholder's pressures to get involved as the justification for the brand's increasing willingness of brands to take sides on socio-political issues. In other words, brands are willing to be part of the conversation, thriving to enhance their legitimacy to take public stands, celebrate and increase sales without being perceived as decoupled from their practices.

Consumers require brands to act beyond their commercial goals. So, when brands launch purpose-driven messages, their motives are increasingly scrutinized, as taking a position can originate aligned and misaligned stakeholders (Moorman, 2020), and it can lead to the consumer's decision to punish the brand (Hong & Li, 2021). These consumers' reactions result from their familiarity, confidence, and trust in a brand, as the higher they are, the greater their expected purchasing intention (Hashem et al. 2023). Thus, the circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation demands a well-defined social-purpose strategy (Vilá & Bharadwaj, 2017), which has two kick-off questions: Are the LGBT issues the appropriate purpose of the brand? Why?

Thinking about both questions provides the first framework for the degree to which a brand is an activist. Moorman (2020) identifies seven degrees: (1) employee engagement, (2) corporate citizenship, (3) brand authenticity, (4) cultural authority, (5) calculative, (6) educators, and (7) political mission. These seven degrees are the options Moorman (2020) identifies for brands to be agents of social change, and they all move from messaging to practice, having an inherent tangible dimension (see Figure 5).

Figure 14. The seven perspectives of brand activism (developed from Moorman (2020) model).

Employee engagement: Acquisition, retention, and productivity.

Educators: Move consumers in a direction that is better for society

Calculate: Instrumental, but it is not necessarily in manipulative.

Corporate citizen: political actors, but without saying how to select the issues to support. Positively contribute to the world

Political mission: linked to social change. Products and services are viewed as tools for creating change in the world

Cultural authority: engagement with societal-level issues. Authority must be earned.

Brand authenticity: brands are political when they can do so in a consistent way with the target markets.

Before exploring these degrees, Proposition 3 has two nuclear questions: Why are brands joining the conversation? Is it for the popularity of LGBT issues and societal expectations? Additionally, Proposition 3 reflects a bidirectional logic, as brands may ask the above questions but from a different point of view: What are your motivations and intentions for your support? What are you expecting from your support?

Outside Marketer 6 (Communications Director, National LGBTQ Task Force/Principal at Target Cue, USA) identifies the willingness to join the LGBT conversation in the early 90s, in what could be the beginning of the process of brands conquering the allyship status for the LGBT movement (in the US context):

> *We began to see that interest in the early 90s when companies like American Airlines and Absolute Vodka started supporting the LGBT community. (...) American Airlines was a big sponsor of GLAAD, and what they did was give us vouchers to travel.*

Our findings identify two different approaches to explain the willingness of brands to join the LGBT conversation, which can work together: extrinsic and intrinsic reasons. Distinguishing the type of motivations is relevant to evaluating the commitment to the

conversation, as it is about the brand integrity (one of the authenticity components) and the extent to which a brand is intrinsically motivated, acting consistently over time (Table 2).

For the intrinsic motivations, participants report a few reasons, namely:
- Brand values, with companies caring about people's well-being and inclusive space (Association 1 - Chair of The Board of Trustees at Schools OUT UK).
- A commitment from the top management to LGBT issues and Inclusive leadership (Association 15 - Co-General Director at REDI Red Empresarial por la Diversidad e Inclusión LGBTI, Spain).
- Engage with their staff (Association 5 - Executive Director at GiveOut, UK).
- Pressure and pro-activeness of employees who want to take a stand (Association 5).
- Doing good, as companies "cannot live in a world where such a significant part of the population lacks dignity and economic opportunities and sometimes is unfairly criminalized and not considered it" (participant Other 4 - coauthor of United Nations Corporate Standards of Conduct and Executive Director at Association of LGBTQ+ corporate Directors, France).

For the extrinsic motivations, participants report a few reasons, namely:
- The private sector started seeing LGBT people as a market instead of a community (Outside Marketer 6). This dream market (Rigdon, 1991) does not create accurate segmentation strategies to account for the diversity of the LGBT consumer population (Baxter, 2010; Branchik, 2002; Ginder & Byun, 2015; Oakenfull, 2007) but follows a vision of it with eye patches of white gay men with income (Outside Marketer 6). Or as participant Other 4 explains, the economic argument that a public stand on LGBT rights and acceptance is good for business.
- Customers demand change (Association 1).
- Reputational gains (Association 5).
- Competitive advantage and differentiation from competition (Activist 12 - LGBTQIAP+ independent activist, Brazil).

When the extrinsic motivations have fallacies, they are dangerous as they will create over-compensated expectations for companies and scepticism and perceptions of hypocrisy for the community. These reasons push brands to get involved in the LGBT conversation mainly for financial gains (the gay dollar). We could also rethink expectations and

willingness to welcome brand support from the consumer's experience. As Outside Marketer 6 puts it:

> *(...) you are also dealing with a community that welcomed that support with open arms because we have not been supported or recognized. At the same time, individuals were saying that this could be a huge piece of how we create change in the culture and get recognition as people and consumers in the capitalist society. We supported and educated corporate supporters by saying that what you are doing is good and you are doing the right thing, but you can't just put a rainbow flag on something or throw stuff at us because it impacts your bottom line.*

As described above, both motivations can and must work together, as brands and companies are businesses. So, why not seek a balance between C-level philosophy, business goals, and internal culture? This means the willingness to join the LGBT conversation has two roots: business and structural identity. Harmony between intrinsic and extrinsic reasons is the goal for brands to join the conversation, being indispensable to guarantee consistency between both to achieve effectiveness. Finally, this consistency must also occur with the defended cause.

Proposition 3 assumption is that brands can reach both statuses (ally and activist) if they do the process well: fulfil societal expectations, be willing to act in the public sphere, choose the right cause, and genuinely commit to the LGBT issues. However, our findings demonstrate tensions between participants about this process, starting with how they understand allyship and activism. For Association 1, activism takes allyship a step further as it includes an eclectic range of actions, from lobbying for change in the parliament to standing up in cultures less inclusive or representing LGBT+ people in advertisements. Standing up according to the geographical context is referred to by our participants a few times to explain activism. Outside Marketer 7 (Partner and Senior Director at LLYC, Mexico), for instance, adds:

> *If a brand celebrates Pride, that is not activism. But if you are celebrating in Saudi Arabia, it could be activism, as it can be dangerous to the brand and helpful for the people to whom you are doing that.*

However, Outside Marketer 7 has a more conservative perspective about the definition of brand activism, arguing that lobbying to change laws is activism, but using LGBT symbols during Pride month or representativeness (in progressive countries) is not.

Activist 2 (Human Rights ARTivist, Botswana) explains how activism takes allyship a step further, arguing that if allyship is about standing with the community when something happens, activism is about being on the frontline and not only standing by:

> *(...) if you need the money, we will give you the money. If you need printing services, we will give you the printing services. We are willing to put our resources into advocacy efforts.*

Thus, our results suggest that for brands to reach activist status demands more than addressing an unresolved matter in society (Nalick et al. 2016) or supporting a controversial issue to build their activist positioning (Mirzaei et al. 2022). It is necessary to take risks, and this is the big step to move from allyship to activism, where brands move from messaging to being active and sharing revolutionary thinking. Outside Marketer 11 (Consultant at Marketing the Rainbow, Netherlands) explains:

> *The step of moving from allyship to activism is big. Activism includes active and revolutionary thinking. Being an ally gives visibility, and visibility is the first step on the road to respect. I have developed a formula in my research: visibility, representation, tolerance, acceptance, and respect. There is allyship and activism, but a brand does not have to be an activist to bring the message across as long they are allies is (...) enough.*

According to Outside Marketer 11, the formula for a brand to be an ally has five elements: visibility, representation, tolerance, acceptance, and respect. So, what is the canon for a brand to be an activist? Our research participants widely corroborate this idea of being active as necessary to reach the activist position. We highlight Association 5 explanation:

> *Activism is broader than advocacy, as advocacy is messaging.*

Relating this to the literature review, allyship seems to be more in the spectrum of symbolic management, while activism is in the substantive management spectrum. Therefore, the decision-making process must thrive for a sustainable engagement with the

LGBT community and movement to be authentic, meaningful and consistent. Inevitably, our findings show that the tensions on different understandings of allyship and activism expand to how participants see brands accessing allyship and activism. The results allow us to identify four different positions regarding the degree how brands access the allyship status and the activist positioning:

- All brands have the potential to be activists. Supporters include Activist 1 (President of Variações - Associação de Comércio e Turismo LGBTI de Portugal) and Activist 5 (Activist for Trans Rights, Portugal).

- Brands are not allies or activists. They are advocates (balance in the spectrum of allyship and activism), considering brands are scared about the political side of activism. Supporters include participant Other 2 (CEO at The Inclusion Imperative, Canada). Several participants argue (above) that activism is lobbying for legislative change. Thus, it assumes that brands must be willing to embrace the political side of the LGBT conversation. The Other 2 participant (CEO at The Inclusion Imperative, Canada) say they are scared of doing it.

Corporations tend to run away from the word activists because it makes them feel it is political. Getting into was considering a political space, by which I mean being an activist. Organizations usually see that as a dangerous territory because it can be easily misinterpreted or twisted by somebody who wants to take the message in another direction. Allies are hugely important, but many people see it as a passive term as it means I believe in your cause, and I support your cause but do not expect me to do anything about it. It is a horrible generalization because many allies are prepared to step up. (...) they will become advocates, and it is championing your cause (...). So, organizations hate to be called activists and can't become allies because if they are allies, they are probably too passive. An organization doing what it should be doing is, for me, an advocate and is powerful. They are the wheels of influence. As an advocate, you are something that we should be championing.

Advocate arises as the safe status for brands who do not wish to be seen as not doing enough but are afraid of the political side of activism. So, being an activist requires courage?

Participant Other 5 (protected identity) says that yes, brand activism requires courage, and businesses avoid colliding with governments, turning its outcomes into romantic ideas with many difficulties to overcome:

> *The social governance sustainability commitments and human rights commitments that brands make are brand activism. But some brands are unable to take a step further and say that they want to get involved with governments, for example.*

Thus, we must consider two new elements to the circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation (Figure 15): (1) from messaging to action, and (2) courage.

Figure 15. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 7].
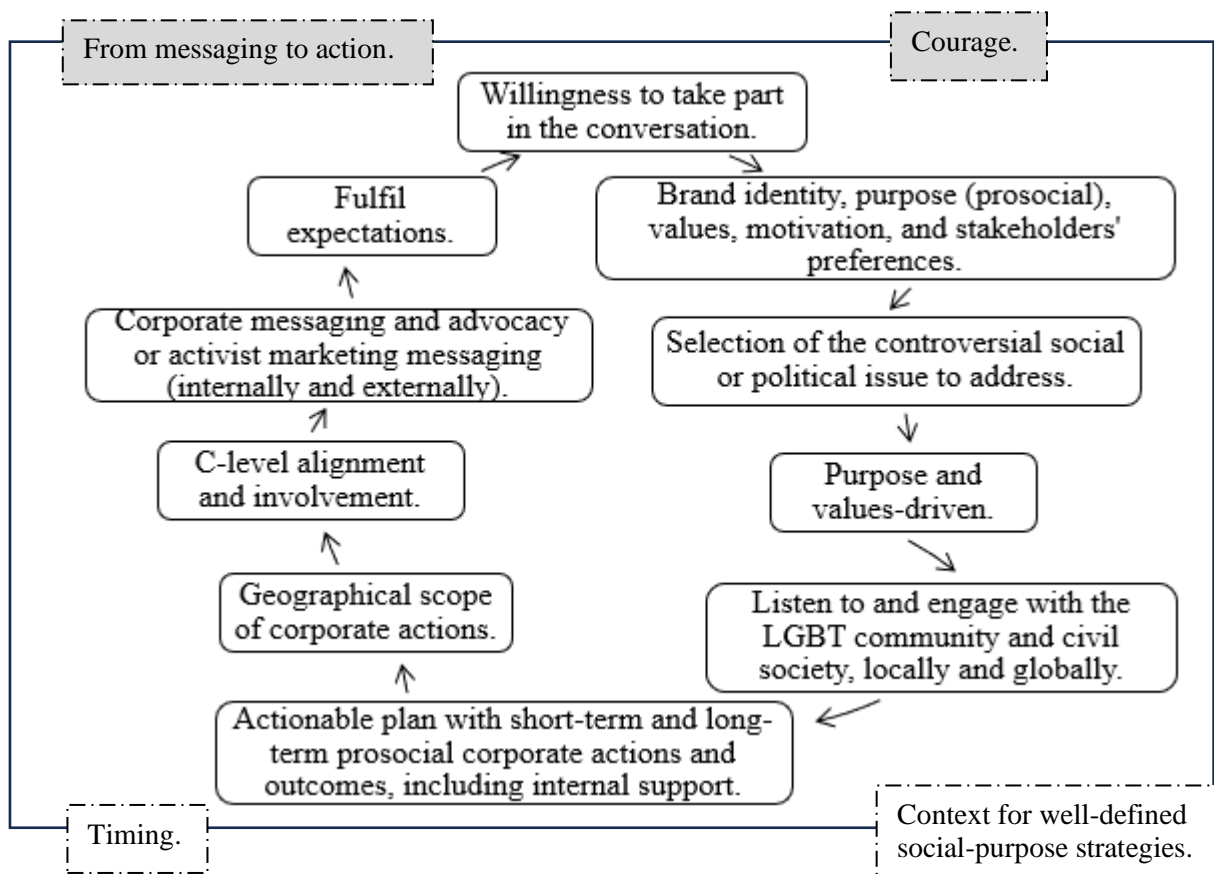
The role of courage to gain the activist positioning is emphasised by participant Other 4:

> *Being an activist is taking risks. I considered an LGBT+ leader to be slightly crazy. Usually, LGBT+ activists lose a lot, and I have never met a brand that made a tremendous sacrifice for the LGBT cause. They take very calculated risks that have*

paid off. Activism is courage. Brands do not have the courage to the extent of losing something.

Our results show that courage can be on the opposite side of extrinsic motivations, following Activist 10 (Writer and campaigner focussed on LGBT+ rights and anti-racism, UK) perspective:

I think brands ultimately are not activists. Brands are strategically aligned with activism to sell their products. At the end of the day, if any brand claims to be an LGBT+ advocate or activist, if supporting LGBT+ people led to their profit margins slipping, they would not do it. And any activism based on making more money is not activism. You are creating positive change for yourself before you create positive change for anyone else.

- Brands are not activists. However, they can be tools, provide resources, and stand by the community when something happens, but they always measure risks. Their alignment with the cause is strategic. So, brands strategically align with social issues, becoming corporate citizens with core values. Supporters include Association 3 (Partnerships Manager at ILGA-Europe, Belgium), which clarifies:

They are not activists and do not need to take this role. The time of thinking that companies' only purpose is to make a profit for their shareholders is over. They want to be corporate citizens with core values in several ways, such as inclusive workplaces, donations to LGBT associations, having LGBT representation in advertising where they operate, and supporting advocacy efforts, among other actions and policies. These actions are aligned with their values but are not part of being an activist.

- Brands are allies and do not need to be activists. Supporters include Outside Marketer 11 and many participants who agree brands can be allies and activists, but moving between statuses requires actions and courage.

Our findings show a connection between the jump from allyship to activism status and the extent to which a brand communicates substantive or tangible actions instead of using rhetoric in a performative way or symbolic strategies (Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990). Therefore, vague messaging becomes relevant to understanding the brand's commitment to the LGBT

community. It is the opposite of brands showing what they are actively doing to and with the LGBT community, and it is also the opposite of what our participants consider necessary for brands to become allies, as it must promote visibility, representation, tolerance, acceptance, and respect. Allyship is about standing by the community when something happens and is not inherently a passive attitude.

The secondary data shows a prevalence of Pride campaigns in 2021 and 2022 with compelling storytelling full of emotions, promises and statements. This strategy is not necessarily wrong if we go for the primary data results, as long as it is not the only thing brands do during Pride month, which we can extend to all year.

Vague messaging and the lack of tangible actions result in ceremonial conformity with societal expectations, stakeholder pressures, and the LGBT issue's popularity or demands, but without concrete positive outcomes. Alone, vague messaging does not fulfil expectations, and it is less than using the brand's channels to provide more space for queer visibility, show long-term commitments, share Pride events and promote internal initiatives.

Fulfilling expectations and vagueness define activist messaging and brand strategies as marketing conquers a vocal relational tone, diminishing its transactional nature. Our results recognise the transactional nature of marketing, companies and brands. However, feeding the dialogue with the LGBT community and maintaining relationships focused on emotional bonds (Asenjo Mccabe & Del Pino-Romero, 2023) demands this authentic relational tone.

Vague messaging (or vague allyship or activist marketing messaging) is about stating that love is love but without giving concrete actions or claiming that people must feel free to be themselves, without explaining how the brand is contributing to that. However, this pattern of calling for love, belonging, and Pride, or using smiles or icons, is commonly mixed with other strategies to co-create meaning with the audience in rainbow-themed campaigns where emotions influence the engagement with Pride, the communities and the LGBT conversation.

6.1.4 Proposition 4

P4: To meaningfully celebrate Pride, fulfil their political mission and avoid pinkwashing accusations, brands must conquer pragmatic and moral legitimacy.

Our results sustain that brands are scared of moving from allyship to activism for the political side of activism, meaning that defining their commitment to LGBT issues as a political mission (see Proposition 4) is inaccurate. This caution in being part of the conversation relies also on the potential distrust of consumers regarding brands' motivations. Our results show that taking public stands on LGBT issues results from a willingness to contribute to a polarizing social issue. However, this willingness is not a synonym for assuming political positioning with a revolutionary posture.

To meaningfully celebrate Pride, Proposition 4 starts from the premise that pragmatic and moral legitimacy dynamics contribute to the survival and empowerment of brands in celebrating Pride, fulfilling their purpose-driven commitment, and the process of being an ally or activist within the context of the LGBT movement. This premise gets roots in the institutional theory (Campbell, 2007), Ellerup Nielsen and Thomsen's (2018) study, and the Suchman (1995) process by which companies gain legitimacy. Unpacking legitimacy allows us to understand why brands join the LGBT conversation and celebrate Pride, avoid pinkwashing suspicions and the degrees to which brands engage with the movement.

Proposition 4 relies on the four forms of brand activism proposed by Vredenburg et al. (2020): authentic activism, inauthentic activism, absent activism, and silent activism.
- Authentic activist brands strive for social change.
- Inauthentic activist brands are externally motivated, and there is a disconnection of communication with purpose, values and corporate practice. They aim to sell more.
- Absent activist brands don't use activist marketing messaging, don't have prosocial brand purpose and values, and have to adopt social practices in their positioning.
- Silent activist brands embrace socio-political causes but operate in secret.

From the engagement perspective of brand activist positionings, we must highlight the insight from the literature on how consumers tolerate baby steps if they are transparent (Vredenburg et al. 2020) but not misleading actions (Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990). The

question is: How can brands conquer legitimacy to celebrate queer people and join the LGBT dialogue?

The LGBT dialogue provides numerous opportunities to the private sector to celebrate the multi-experiences of Queerness, promote inclusion and fight prejudice, from Trans Day of Visibility (31st March) to Coming Out Day (11th October). However, celebrating Pride in June became mainstream. Why? And is it necessary to continue dialoguing during all year?

In June, many brands, authentic or not, talk about LGBT people. Pride month became an opportunity to advocate for respect and equality worldwide, to demand progress, and to follow the herd. Producing rainbow goods without engaging with the community's struggles, victories, and experiences creates tensions.

These tensions result from the expectations that socially responsible marketing creates as it operates with an implicit social contract where concrete outcomes attest to the level of commitment of the brands and may create LGBT-friendly brands. Our results show that producing rainbow goods is not enough. Participant Other 4 (coauthor of United Nations Corporate Standards of Conduct, France) claims:

> *With the Standards of Conducts for Business, we wanted that if you say that you want to be LGBT-friendly, that's enough for us to endorse these standards. You don't have to be perfect. I need you to say that you are on a journey to try to align your policies and practices to the international standards of the human rights of LGBT people. From time to time, I get angry with companies because if they are not living the values they are proclaiming, they are hurting the LGBT community.*

Participant Other 4 adds:

> *The fight for LGBT+ people is a fight for liberation. If you are LGBT-friendly, you contribute to that liberation, which is the test for authenticity.*

This test is the social and political process brands face when joining the LGBT conversation, including launching Pride campaigns, and the success of legitimation is not only measured by how the audience responds to it in terms of digital marketing metrics or sales gains. It is through the extent to which a product, a service, or a company adheres to shared rules, standards, norms, or traditions of the market and community to become allies

and LGBT brand activists. According to Suchman (1995), legitimacy depends on socio-cultural alignment. As Kates (2005) explains, it is how brands benefit the community. So, how, when and why do brands have the legitimacy to celebrate Queer people?

Proposition 4 claims it is through the process of evolving from symbolic value legitimacy to pragmatic legitimacy. In other words, it depends on the private sector's engagement with the LGBT community, including activists, associations, NGOs, and people in general, taking ownership of joining the LGBT conversation and how it takes place. Brands must negotiate with consumers to join Pride Month with meaning and overpass eventual distrust when taking public stands, as the political roots of LGBT activism are hostile to capitalist interests (Kates, 2005). Hence, we consider two new directives to the circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation (Figure 16): (1) ownership and (2) negotiation.

Figure 16. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 8].
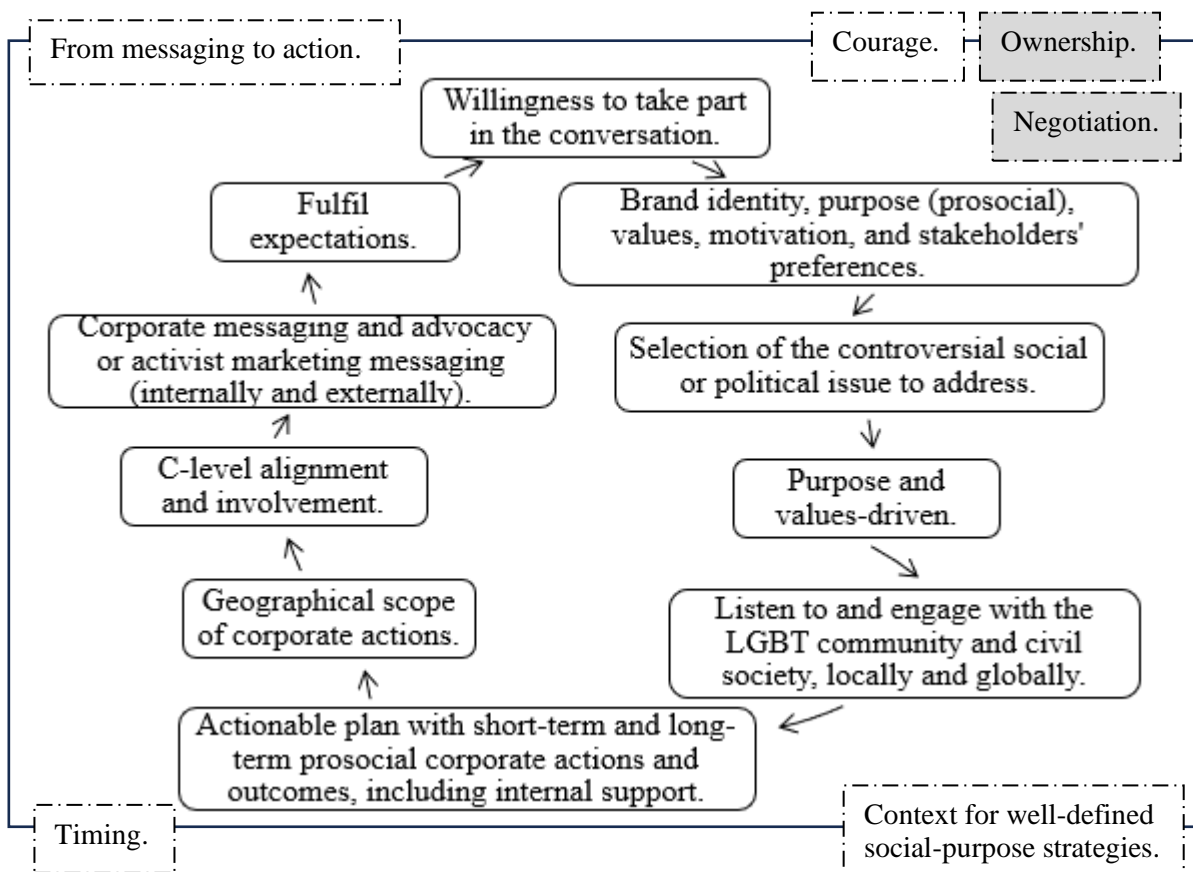
Celebrating Pride and ignoring the combative spirit of the LGBT movement may be a way to overcome the political roots of taking public stands on this polarised conversation. Our findings identify a tension between the fight and the party dimensions of Pride, with

Association 4 (Board Member at European Pride Organisers Association, Denmark) arguing that June as Pride Month is a recent corporate invention and claiming the community must be careful how it engages with brands. It also highlights the necessity of having a long-term commitment during the year, but this might not be easy for brands:

> *I think it's important if the Pride events could have events all year, but it's an easy win for brands.*

In their 2022 Pride campaign, Levi's addresses this tension between party and fight by stating it stands up for love, protests, and parties in June and every month between January and December. Our findings distinguish Pride from a corporate perspective and an activism perspective. This separation allows brands to position themselves in the process of joining the LGBT conversation without assuming the political side they might be scared of or taking over this political side if they wish. Activist 11 (Student Assistant in the Communication, Policy & Fundraising Department at Det Nationale Sorgcenter, Denmark) explains this idea:

> *For companies, Pride is a party and an opportunity to make fun at company parties. For activism, it is a demonstration and a fight against discrimination, for rights and acceptance, and for people who can be themselves in their streets.*

However, our findings also show a lack of agreement regarding how brands should manage the political side of the LGBT movement, with Outside Marketer 1 (Pursuit Manager - ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance - at Deloitte, Spain) having one of the strongest opinions about:

> *I have been cautious about how corporate Pride has become. Twenty years ago, seeing a brand marching in Pride was incredible. Nowadays, seeing a three-hour parade full of politicians and marketing will do more harm than good. (…) To march, you should also care about the health of trans people the security of LGBT youth or the rights of LGBT refugees. It's not just marketing, as there is something inherently political in the movement that businesses need to get on board with or don't bother. We need to go back to that place.*

Drawing from Outside Marketer 1 affirmation, we could recall the idea of Manfredi-Sánchez (2019) regarding how brand activism borrows the aesthetics of authenticity from

the campaigns of social movements to join the conversation, featuring five vectors: symbolic value, defense of controversial issues, engagement with a global audience through alliances with third parties, live in digital activism (Selander & Jarvenpaa, 2016; George & Leidner, 2019) and masters the language of the local or universal. Therefore, adopting non-neutral positionings on social issues with the potential to be disruptive or to create tensions (Kapital *et al*. 2022) is a baby step and not enough for an activist brand positioning in the market, the community, and the conversation or dialogue. Our findings show that the decision relies on the eight typologies supporting this research, as participant Other 1 (Postdoctoral Researcher at Copenhagen Business School, Denmark) explains:

> *Pride has gone from riots and protests against police violence and brutality against LGBT+ to this speech on human rights and the sacredness of the individual, and regardless of whether you identify or not as an LGBT+ person, you can see yourself as a part of the movement – this is what the mainstem side does. However, becoming more mainstream is one of the accusations as it became more party and less political, and what we see is that many corporations see more the party side of the movement. But throughout the partnership, companies start to see more of this political side of the movement, as they realize there's this other side of the coin, which is fighting for your rights, how internationally the community is still marginalized.*

Therefore, Pride celebrates all the achievements and raises awareness of the issues that still demand change. The decision on how a brand celebrates Pride goes through the sieve of the regulatory body: the activists and associations from the LGBT community.

Our findings suggest this negotiation is between the community, which is the regulator of how brands join the conversation and its view of what is reasonable, and the companies, which have to manage expectations with what is practical to do when adhering to the movement. These findings echo Suchman's (1995) process by which organisations gain legitimacy, including moral and pragmatic dynamics. It relies on how brands negotiate with the community by incorporating a public dialogue between them and their audiences.

Pragmatic dynamic materialises through the company's active efforts to satisfy its audience expectations and needs, including:

1. Direct exchanges between the company and the community. E.g., products, collections, gifts-in-kind, crisis support services to LGBT+ people and advocacy groups (tangible actions) or donations and dividends (financial support).

2. Influence and audience connection by fulfilling the implicit social contract with the community and generating outcomes. Collaborating with LGBT activists shows a predisposition to engage with the community and speak out.

Moral dynamic materialises through differing regulatory (audiences) approaches to how brands must embrace the LGBT conversation. In other words, the social judgments about the company's actions regarding celebrating Pride or being an ally or an activist. These judgments feature three applicable forms:

1. Consequential: Organisation's objective accomplishments and outcomes.

2. Procedural: Adoption of socially accepted procedures and programs.

3. Structural: The audience perceives the organisation as authentic and worthy of support. This perception depends on features with clear messages and positive impact, such as the company board having a sub-committee to address LGBT+ acceptance and fight against prejudice in the workplace.

Activist 2 (Human Rights ARTivist, Botswana) highlights the relevance of internal work and awareness to materialise this idea of moral dynamic with the conquering of legitimacy:

> *It would depend on the brand. For instance, if the company founder is pro-queer. As a tech company owner, if you are dissatisfied with the number of unemployed LGBT+ people because they don't have the qualifications, you can partner with education-focused entities to provide solutions and mitigate the problem. You eventually solve a challenge for the community that you want to solve. So, how do you want to be seen doing the work? Because if you want to put a rainbow on everything, that's not it.*

In summary, Proposition 4 aims to understand when brands are ready to join the LGBT conversation, and our findings overlap two approaches. One approach, which Association

9 (Vice President at GLAAD Media Institute, USA) leads, relies on the idea that if a brand has a voice and impact, then the right time to join the movement arrived:

The right time to say something is when your voice has some impact.

The second approach, which Outside Marketer 12 leads, is that purpose is not a Swiss army knife or that socially responsible marketing is not allyship or activism:

The purpose is not a tool to apply everywhere. Brands need to do it in a very conscious and authentic way, where the purpose belongs to the DNA of the brands and the values they stand for. So, purpose is a tool that can unlock additional growth, but it doesn't mean purpose can relate to everything. First, you need to answer: What is the brand purpose? And only then you can see how to apply it.

As our code structure mission is to explore the wheels of moving from allyship to activism within the LGBT context, we identify an unanimity about brands celebrating the LGBT community only during Pride Month: it is to get "the pink dollar" (Association 1, Chair Of The Board Of Trustees at Schools OUT UK), it is "money laundry" (Activist 2), "performative allyship" (Association 4), "is inappropriate" (Association 2, Co-chair at Workplace Pride, Netherlands), "is not enough" (Outside Marketer 7, Partner and Senior Director at LLYC, Mexico), and it is "hurting the LGBT community" (participant Other 4).

This unanimous posture from the regulatory perspective relates to the condemnation of inauthentic activist brands, as exposed by Moorman (2020), Vredenburg et al. (2020), and Clements (2017). It grounds the tendency of brands to celebrate Pride and ignore the combative spirit of the conversation. The findings talk about different regulatory approaches to private sector engagement, which we allocate into three boxes:

1. Box one: Manage This. The community expects brands to do reasonable or appropriate things during Pride month to avoid pinkwashing and Pride illegitimate appropriation. E.g.:

   a) Identify where they can have an impact.

   b) Make Donations.

   c) Allocate internal resources to the community needs, such as volunteering.

d) To raise awareness of the challenges and fights of the LGBT people worldwide.

2. Box two: Make it Happen. From the strategic communication point of view and marketing umbrella, brands need to ensure the community will not understand their moves as PR stunts but as intrinsic commitments to the community that brands are working on to make it happen. E.g.:

   a) Continuity and consistency.

   b) Contribution to the cause.

   c) Go beyond symbolism and rhetoric or selling products.

   d) Baby steps are not insincere commitments.

   e) Engage with specialists, associations, and the community.

   f) Avoid going silent outside of June.

3. Box three: Prescriptive. The regulatory body expects brands to do all these things, including boxes one and two. E.g.:

   a. Alignment between messaging and practice.

   b. Consistency between storytelling and storydoing.

   c. Measurement of results and outcomes.

   d. March for Pride, but also do the work.

These boxes (Figure 17) are not about the fallacy of expecting perfection from brands joining the conversations. They give guidelines to ensure brands live what they proclaim.

Figure 17. The three private sector engagement boxes to fulfil regulatory expectations.
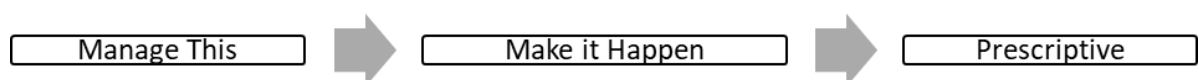
Brands move from a broader strategic communication to an actionable plan that pushes the brand's contribution forward in the conversation. Happy Socks continues to power up this actionable plan by stating the following on Instagram during the 2022 Pride campaign:

Being an ally is not something that can be switched on and off when suitable.

Time space arises as vital to private sector engagement. This typology refers to the opposition between being vocal all year versus only during Pride month.

50% of brands actively campaign for LGBT rights while communicating their commitment consistently over time (N=10, The Body Shop, PUMA, Pantone, Mercedes-Benz, L'Oréal Paris, Havaianas, Harrys, Happy Socks, Levi's, and Abercrombie & Fitch) in 2021 (Table 22), reinforcing their intrinsic motivations.

Table 22. Time Space representativeness in 2021 and 2022 Pride campaigns

	LGBT Facts
2021 Pride campaigns	10 = 50%
2022 Pride campaigns	10 = 50%

The results suggest different approaches, namely:
- Long-term donations, materialising the pragmatic and moral dynamics of legitimacy. These donations help advance human rights for LGBT people.
- Sincere commitment to contribute to real change in the world, raising awareness and assuming Pride in supporting the community all year.
- Make the reasonable expected from standards such as the UN Free & Equal standards of conduct for business.

In 2022, 50% of brands also had an all-year commitment to the LGBT+ community (N=10, The Body Shop, Pantone, L'Oréal Paris, Lego, Havaianas, Harrys, Happy Socks, Farfetch, Levi's, and Abercrombie & Fitch). Our findings add two new approaches to marketing the continuing dialogue with the community, with a notorious product orientation, namely:
- Invite consumers to celebrate LGBT people all year round with the pride goods.
- Pride collections are available all year.

Our findings give two more approaches:

- Make a clear statement about publicly standing with the community for love, freedom, protests and parties all year.
- Promote internal initiatives and efforts, from events, research, LGBT employee groups, symbolic initiatives, and HR policies.

6.1.5 Proposition 5

P5: To be an activist brand within the LGBT context, putting a rainbow up for Pride month is a symbolic move from a broader strategic communication that pushes the brand's contribution forward and its contribution toward the LGBT conversation.

Proposition 5 claims the following: Pursuing the status of an activist brand for LGBT demands pushing forward the dialogue, fight and celebration through corporate efforts, including marketing and socially responsible communication. Communicating requires having something to say. That said, demand doing the work and having an actionable plan. Saying that the brand supports controversial issues is not enough to conquer activist status, and our findings assume it is not enough to gain ally status, either.

The literature claims that to be an activist brand within the LGBT context, the private sector must go beyond advocacy or messaging (Wettstein & Baur, 2016) and invest in:

- Substantive actions and policies (Kapitan et al. 2019).
- Donations (Crimmins & Horn, 1996)
- Partnerships (Duane & Domegan, 2019; Miguel & Miranda, 2023).
- Third-party certifications (Miguel & Miranda, 2023).

These branches help companies acquire legitimacy in their activism efforts (Miguel & Miranda, 2023). Therefore, they belong to the circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation, where the relationship between brand participation and social change arises at the heart of strategic communication. Why? These branches belong to the typology development in Chapter 4 and are mandatory to understand how brands are messaging, enacting, and working regarding allyship and activism. To better understand Proposition 5, we must depart from the collaborations and partnerships typology. This typology is the

extent to which brands work with external third parties, including spokespersons, associations, activists, and artists.

75% of brands (N=15) actively highlight their collaborations and partnerships with LGBT voices and third parties in 2021 (Table 23). In 2022, 65% of brands (N=13, Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Farfetch, Happy Socks, Harrys, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, Mercedes-Benz, Pantone, PUMA, and The Body Shop) communicated their engagement with the LGBT community on their Instagram accounts (Table 23).

Table 23. Collaborations and Partnerships representativeness in 2021 and 2022 Pride campaigns

	Collaborations and Partnerships
2021 Pride campaigns	15 = 75%
2022 Pride campaigns	13 = 65%

Our results from secondary data classify the engagement of the private sector with LGBT voices during Pride month in five categories:

1. Financial resources: Sponsor and donate to local, regional, national or worldwide associations and NGOs, from Havaianas to Confections, Polo Club, PUMA and Harrys.

2. Multilevel partnerships: Include several aspects, from donations and sponsorship to message deliveries, employee voluntarism, internal events, and the co-creation of products or collections. E.g., Happy Socks and L'Oréal Paris.

3. Visibility, representation and space: The campaign cast includes LGBT people. E.g., C&A. Brands use their channels to raise awareness about LGBT facts, Queer stories and experiences, challenges and victories.

4. Connection: Uses personal stories and testimonials. E.g., Farfetch and Levi's. Includes participating in Pride events. E.g., Levi's.

5. Networking and community engagement: Dialogue with the community and open appeals for people to join a project, challenge, journey or goal (including internal support). E.g., Lego and The Body Shop.

The approaches to collaborations, partnerships or donations may vary in form and time, allowing brands to select from numerous possibilities to campaign for LGBT rights and acceptance. Our results identify seventeen options:

1. Donate to one or several LGBT+ associations and non-governmental organizations with national reach, such as The Trevor Project, ALL Out Brazil, and GLAAD (e.g., Crate and Barrel, L'Oréal Paris, and Polo Club);

2. Donate to LGBT+ associations or non-governmental organizations with international reach, such as OutRight Action International (e.g., Havaianas, Levi's and L'Oréal Paris).

3. Support Pride organizations and foundations (e.g., Pantone, Happy Socks, and C&A);

4. Work with associations, non-governmental organizations, artists, influencers, activists, and advocates (e.g., Farfetch, Havaianas, Mercedes-Benz, The Body Shop and Harry's);

5. Co-create Pride collections (e.g., Abercrombie & Fitch);

6. Contribute to crisis support services for LGBT+ people (e.g., Levi's);

7. Donate to small diversity clubs (e.g., Confections) or non-governmental organizations with a local or regional scope (e.g., Levi's).

8. Coalitions of global companies dedicated to LGBT+ inclusion. E.g., Open for Business (Lego).

9. International associations or foundations that support the LGBT+ community directly or through other organizations at a global and grassroots level, such as Phluid Phoundation, Stonewall and Cara Delevingne Foundation (e.g., Lego and PUMA).

10. Worldwide networks for LGBT young people or with other specific causes. (e.g., C&A).

11. Organizations and not-for-profit foundations dedicated to LGBT+ acceptance and belonging in the workplace, with a national or international reach. (e.g., Lego).

12. LGBT+ activists and ambassadors (e.g., C&A and Happy Socks).

13. LGBT+ community leaders (e.g., Levi's).

14. Local or international LGBT+ artists, photographers, influencers, designers, misses, athletes, and content creators (e.g., Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A).

15. Press partners. E.g., Interview Magazine (Farfetch).

16. Other brands from the same enterprise group or not. E.g., Flamingo and Fossil (Harrys).

17. Brand community, from fans to employees, families, and consumers. E.g., Lego and L'Oréal Paris.

Our findings show that the most common partnerships are with local or international associations, which define the message, position and cause embraced by the brand. For instance, Abercrombie & Fitch, by selecting the Trevor Project as a partner, not only for its donation but also to co-create the Pride campaign, is more focused on raising awareness and resources to help end suicide among LGBT+ young people. However, our results also reveal that most of these collaborations communicated during Pride are not with Pride entities. Is this a red flag for the business and marketing strategy? Hence, the collaborations and partnerships typology also have an inter-complementary connection to the community engagement typology, referring to the proximity to the LGBT communities from a brand commitment perspective. Scrutinizing this proximity requires communication in the public sphere. In 2021, 85% of brands (N=17) engage with the LGBT community during Pride Month through rainbow-themed campaigns (Table 24). In 2022, 65% of brands (N=13, Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A, Levi's, Farfetch, Happy Socks, Harrys, Havaianas, Confections, Lego, L'Oréal Paris, Pantone, PUMA, and The Body Shop) with the LGBT community during their 2022 Pride campaigns.

Table 24. Community Engagement representativeness in 2021 and 2022 Pride campaigns

	Community Engagement
2021 Pride campaigns	17 = 85%
2022 Pride campaigns	13 = 65%

Our findings show this is one of the typologies with the best performance, powered by other typologies such as Queer Imagery, Product Orientation and Collaborations and partnerships. Also, the results identify one pattern: brands use LGBT voices to spread a message. Is this connection, empowerment, representation, or mastering the community language to avoid backlash and corporate hypocrisy fame? These LGBT voices include associations, artists, celebrities, influencers, activists, historical names of the movement, employees, anonymous, and others. Alongside this engagement, a few brands overcome the role of brands with socially responsible marketing to become educators or pursue concrete results, highlighting The Body Shop, Mercedes-Benz, C&A and Havaianas. Generally, we have five degrees of engagement:

1. Provide the spotlight on the LGBT+ community and their allies.

2. Participation in Pride events.

3. Promoting activities all year round.

4. Donations to LGBT+ players.

5. Workplace and workforce stories and initiatives.

Simon (2011) claims that brands do not want to do the work, creating symbolic actions to solve social problems. Therefore, brands invest in Queer Imagery and rhetoric, small gestures to engage with an audience without alienating potential consumers. When brands build the expectation that they will fight against prejudice, doing the bare minimum is dangerous. Brand activism implies connecting, and it comes with a deep respect for the community, where mobilizing people and resources through awareness, influence, and communication may provide social benefits congruent with the value system of the stakeholders (Suchman, 1995) and its pressures or expectations. Accordingly, putting a rainbow up for Pride month must be a symbolic move and not the end of the

communication, as the goal is to promote the visibility and value of LGBT people. Pride aims to claim public space and challenge dominant attitudes towards homosexuality (Brickell, 2000; Browne, 2007). Activist 14 (Sustainability, Diversity & Inclusion Advocate, Egypt) explores this idea:

> *Pride events are so popular in the UK among employers that it is almost fashionable for a company to march as part of a Pride parade to have rainbow colours merchandising in June. It is relevant because it shows that your firm cares, that we are not being forgotten, and allows people to be themselves in the workplace and celebrates them, their Pride and their joy. However, there is a very slippery turn to Pinkwashing when you only have companies active during Pride month, June, July, or August, and their LGBT+ network only exits on marketing brochures and fancy websites, but nothing happens on the ground. The firm does not host events, or it is not putting money behind the marketing brochures. It is performative activism, where you try to catch the benefits of being LGBT+ inclusive, namely the economic benefits, without changing the status quo. You are only challenging your balance sheet. You are misleading the consumers. Some people say brands and corporations should stay out of the LGBT conversation. Brands and corporations should not participate unless they actively believe in the cause. They need to increase the LGBT inclusiveness in the firm, for example. Brands are important because they influence a lot of young people. If LEGO releases its first rainbow-colour LEGO set, it is important because it sends a direct message to young people.*

Our results suggest donations arise as relevant decisions to define how brands celebrate Pride, join the LGBT conversation, pursue legitimacy, choose causes within the broad spectrum of the LGBT movement, and move ahead with collaborations and partnerships. In 2021, 55% of brands publicly communicated donations during June. In 2022, 50% of brands made donations in the form of money (it could be, for instance, through sponsorship, patronization, and funding). The financial support is intrinsically connected to rainbow-themed campaigns and collections as our results assemble eight degrees:

1. The donation amount is independent of the collection sales and revenue, being pre-established (e.g., Confections or Crate and Barrel);

2. Relocation of campaign budget (e.g., Happy Socks);

3. A percentage of sales (e.g., Havaianas);

4. Part of the sales profits of the Pride products is donated, with a predefined maximum ceiling. E.g., Puma.

5. 100% of sales prices (e.g., Polo Club);

6. 100% of profits with the Pride products (Harrys);

7. A proportion of the revenue with a maximum amount predefined (PUMA);

8. The donations are communicated within the Pride campaign but are not Pride-Month limited and Pride-collection limited. E.g., Levi's and Lego.

As Galan-Ladero (2013) argues that who pays the donation influences the brand positioning regarding activism, we raised the question: Who pays it?

Our results show a lack of promotion of direct donations from consumers to an association. Generically, we have the following options, deeply connected to the flow of sales and consumer adherence:

1. The brand defines the amount of money;

2. The financial donation depends on the number of sales or revenue.

Association 3, ILGA-Europe, through document analysis, shows how complex the celebration of partnerships and collaborations between LGBT voices and the private sector can be. From our results, we raise two doubts:

1. Does working with an association or activists communicate different messages to the audience and the community?

2. Getting paid for the work, through goods, money or membership fees, strengthens or weakens the partnership?

As participant Other 5 (protected identity) claims, the private sector and activists are not friends.

With activists, companies empower their work as advocates through lobbying and pushing change and stereotypes.

With association, brands start speaking up. Also, associations help brands by preventing them from falling into traps and getting backlash from the community.

Associations and activists raise the vessels of activism for brands to become more vocal, but participant Other 5 points out that companies are still uncomfortable with being more vocal and that it is necessary to understand the reasons behind this. Hence, from activists, our findings suggest the relevance of being analytical, ethical, and rigorous, as working with activists gives credibility to the brand, helping the pursuit of legitimacy to celebrate Pride and join the LGBT conversation. Activist 12 (LGBTQIAP+ independent activist, Brazil) emphasises:

> *Activists are the varnish that brands need. Being able to engage in dialogue with a passionate activist is a veneer that the brand wants, and I'm going to be very demanding: I want to know who the people involved are, how and what images are going to be released, what the proposal is, and only then can we sit down.*

This scrutiny that Activist 12 indicates spills over to the engagement of associations with brands. However, our findings show three levels of scrutiny and demands with brands:

- Level 1: Lack of specific requirements to analyse a brand request to collaborate or partner with the association. The level one is the less common from the three levels.
- Level 2: Internal culture audit to understand where the company is, where it wants to go, and the needs to achieve that goal.
- Level 3: Assess if a company is a good partner for the association through a checklist of requirements, from internal policies to the supply chain and the physical installations.

These three levels are relevant to understanding, for instance, how and why brands work with specific associations by analysing and dissecting the requirements of associations to accept or decline to collaborate with a private company. Also, it allows us to explore the motivations behind a request from a company, the type of commitment, the starting point, and the expectations. Our results allow us to identify different levels of engagement between both parts, all of them directly attached to the level of scrutiny, namely:

- Level 1: Being a member or a partner of an association or NGO is not a stamp of respect for human rights (UN standards). Also, it does not mirror genuine engagement with the LGBT conversation or an actionable plan to push change forward. It only says that a company commits to the LGBT issue.

- Level 2: Being a member does not mean the company is doing the work. It means it wants to do the assignment.

- Level 3: Being a member means the company scored positively on the test and has what it takes to join the conversation or to start doing the work. This level features sublevels of engagement, such as donation and mention, internal actions, and getting involved in advocacy efforts to support the community and putting pressure where and when needed.

To associations with a business core instead of a community one, we could add three other levels, according to Association 15 (Co-General Director at REDI Red Empresarial por la Diversidad e Inclusión LGBTI, Spain):

- Level 1: Activation. It is to talk about LGBT+ diversity in the corporate world. We help the company to understand how to manage this type of diversity.

- Level 2: Connection. Companies want to do things, but sometimes they don't know how to do. Associations can connect companies with other companies already working on this LGBT+ diversity so that they can learn with others.

- Level 3: Empowerment. Associations may give tools and knowledge to companies about LGBT+ diversity on specific topics, from how to implement LGBT+ resource groups to how to welcome trans people.

The membership program is a relevant source of revenue for some associations. Hence, checking the box in the collaboration and partnership typology, we must explore the collaboration requirements and outcomes. Overlapping the perspectives of our participants, the discomfort of assuming the political roots of the LGBT movement co-stars with a new element: taking risks to provoke measurable and long-lasting change. This change is the contribution underlying Proposition 5 and the new element for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation (Figure 18): making the difference.

Figure 18. The circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation [Update 9].
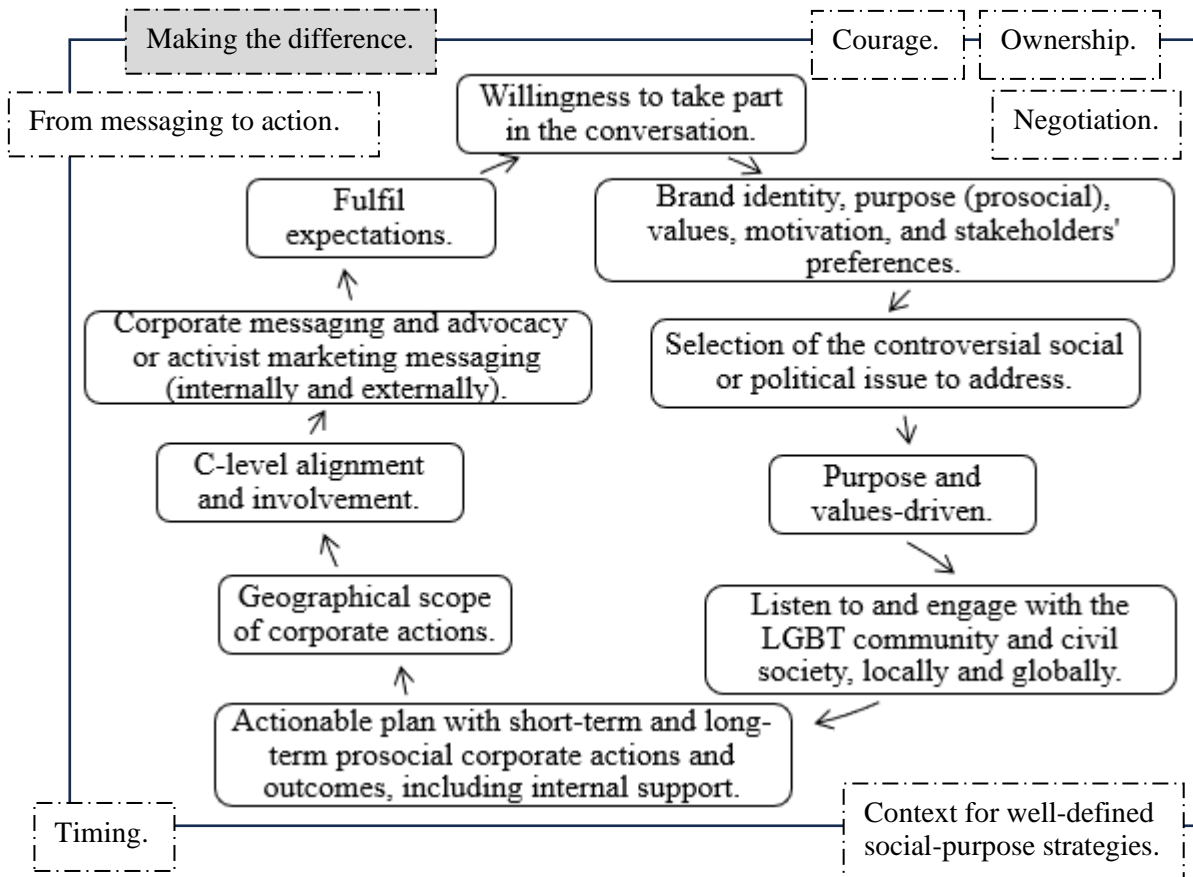
Activist 6 (protected identity) identifies two possibilities:

- Brands are allies of change, giving resources and influence.
- Brands are activists of change, being vocal even in adverse contexts and the possibility of facing negative reactions not because of pinkwashing but because it is a polarised topic with a hostile social-political ambience.

Making a positive and lasting difference in the LGBT community echoes our findings regarding how brands are storytelling their engagement in three key patterns:

1. The message highlights the efforts to contribute to a better world, potentially achieving a stronger emotional connection with the targeted audience.

2. Brands prefer vague messaging instead of showing what they are actively doing to help the LGBT+ community.

3. There is an intersection of Pride messages and Pride collections.

These messaging patterns show the discomfort of assuming the political face of the LGBT dialogue, but it is also an open window to the ability to contribute to change. Explaining both dynamics:

1. When discomfort and the symbolic dynamic of legitimacy win, the idea of brands contributing to the LGBT conversation is romantic.

Our findings show the common ground between activists who claim brands are not making a lasting difference and accessing the activist status: They [the brands] are not ready or willing to lose on behalf of the progress. Hence, starting socially responsible marketing to reach ally status and eventually activist condition may require raising the following question: Do you have the courage to make a real difference and contribute to change in the LGBT dialogue?

Answering this question demands caution, as it is context-sensitive. The danger and the safety of being an LGBT activist varies according to the geographical scope and the performer. It is different if the role belongs to an individual or a brand. Activists argue that individuals require courage, sacrifice, and boldness. Brands may influence society and help to understand inclusivity but do not generate change. Symbolic wins are representation in the media or marketing campaigns and casts, which is great but not far-reaching.

2. When the pragmatic dynamic of legitimacy and revolutionary thinking win, brands can become strategic social agents (Schoenberger-Orgad, 2011).

Our findings identify several actions, including producing meaning, creating discourses for social change (Ciszek, 2017), standing up for human rights, acting in the public sphere, and going beyond symbols. Inside DEI Manager 5 (Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer at Levi Strauss & Co., USA) explains through the example of Levi's commitment:

> *You can through the holistic approach of supporting or posing legislation that is inclusive or exclusive, funding non-profit organizations dedicated to protecting and upholding the LGBTQ community, participating in the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index, having benefits that are inclusive for LGBTQ employees and their partners having benefits and other perks that are going to be in support of the LGBTQ+ community and families. All of that is part of the commitment and makes it very real and tangible.*

Marketing and advertising come up as unable to provoke social change in solo performances. Visibility and representation are essential but dangerous if overused. Hence, our findings show the decisiveness of combining visibility and representation with acceptance and respect or influence with activation, connection and empowerment. Recalling the UN LGBTI standards, the critical role of five wheels: workplace, time, support, marketplace and community. Communication, strategy, and marketing give the public space to ongoing work inside and outside companies and their brands. Association 14 (Executive Director at Pride at Work Canada) summarises both explained dynamics above:

It harms queer and trans people if you are constantly putting a rainbow everywhere. Every exposure comes with a kind of backlash, so when we get visual support with real support is a lose-lose situation. So, solve a problem of the community, advocate for a right, and not stay silent when people try to criminalize who we are. If you are doing this and a marketing campaign, that fines and does not matter what some people think.

As joining the conversation and celebrating Pride relies on strategic communication to impart social change, Inside Marketer 3 definition of The Body Shop activism through the goal of provoking tangible change summarises the Proposition 5 findings:

My biggest frustration about brand activism is the feeling that you must have an opinion about everything every time. And we strongly believe it is better to be a little slower and more thoughtful in our response. What can we do, and how can we be more impactful? What is our position? What can we get people to do? What are we doing already? We do not want to be reactivists. We want to be activists and provoke tangible change. That is how our activism is defined.

Our results and the circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation allow us to develop and implement a socially responsible marketing strategy to join the LGBT conversation and celebrate Pride. Our findings show a step-by-step method, where putting a rainbow for Pride or marketing the rainbow (and other symbols) belongs to a broader plan of actionable tasks and commitments, pushing the brand's contribution forward and its contribution toward the LGBT conversation. However, this broader plan is not a

strategic communication plan, as said in Proposition 5, or a game plan, but a business plan, where communication is one of the wheels. Finally, our results explore two axes: must-have and nice-to-have. The pattern from the results is clear: marketing or strategic communication of brands as social change is the last step in the business plan to engage with the LGBT community and controversial issues or causes. In other words, companies (private sector) must do before telling. Additionally, we created a plan structure with five umbrellas, as shown in Figure 19.

Figure 19. The five umbrellas of the business plan to join the LGBT conversation.
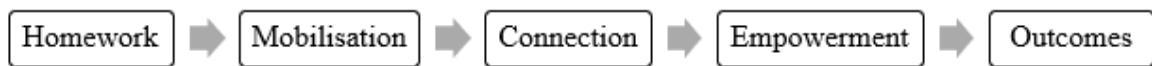
6.2.   (Re)Conceptualising the conceptual model

The present research was motivated by the intent of exploring how brands engage with the multi-LGBT and Queer conversations, contexts, and communities through marketing. Consequently, many pain points came out during the literature review and the data collection and treatment, such as:

1. Is Pride for sale?

2. Are brands capable of contributing to a better world?

3. Is allyship and activism accessible to brands and the private sector?

4. Is strategic communication a pinkwashing driver or a tool for brands to create meaningful discourses and become social change agents?

5. Is it possible to manage corporate goals and societal expectations?

6. Is Brand Activism the thing, or is it a romantic idea?

7. What are the good and the bad practices for ally and activist marketing messaging and actions?

As previously defined during this research, the significance and topicality of this work rely on several pillars, such as:

*   The sparsity of academic knowledge about brand activism and brand activists.
*   The new consumer demands, needs, relations and expectations with brands and the private sector.
*   The lack of scholarship about the process of conquering the ally and activist status within the LGBT context.
*   The urgency in clarifying the role of purpose-driven brands in contemporary marketing strategies.
*   The surrounding fog regarding the role of strategic communication in imparting social change with a more commercial root.
*   The turbulence about what is and what is not allyship and activism.
*   The urgency in comprehending the relevance of legitimacy and authenticity to join the activist conversation.

The purpose was always making academic and managerial contributions to a newborn yet powerful marketing area. In this sense, we employed exploratory research with a qualitative lens and TIU-based approach to collect secondary and primary data within an interpretative paradigm.

The secondary data was Instagram- and website-based. The primary data was in-depth interviews with activists, associations, brands, outside marketers and other relevant participants as diversity and inclusivity managers, consultants, or researchers. The sample is small, purpose and non-random.

To proceed with this discussion, we must rethink our initial conceptual model, which has been improved through the research as it is an exploratory study with a TIU approach. Here is the conceptual model (Figure 4) developed during our work:

Figure 20. Conceptual model
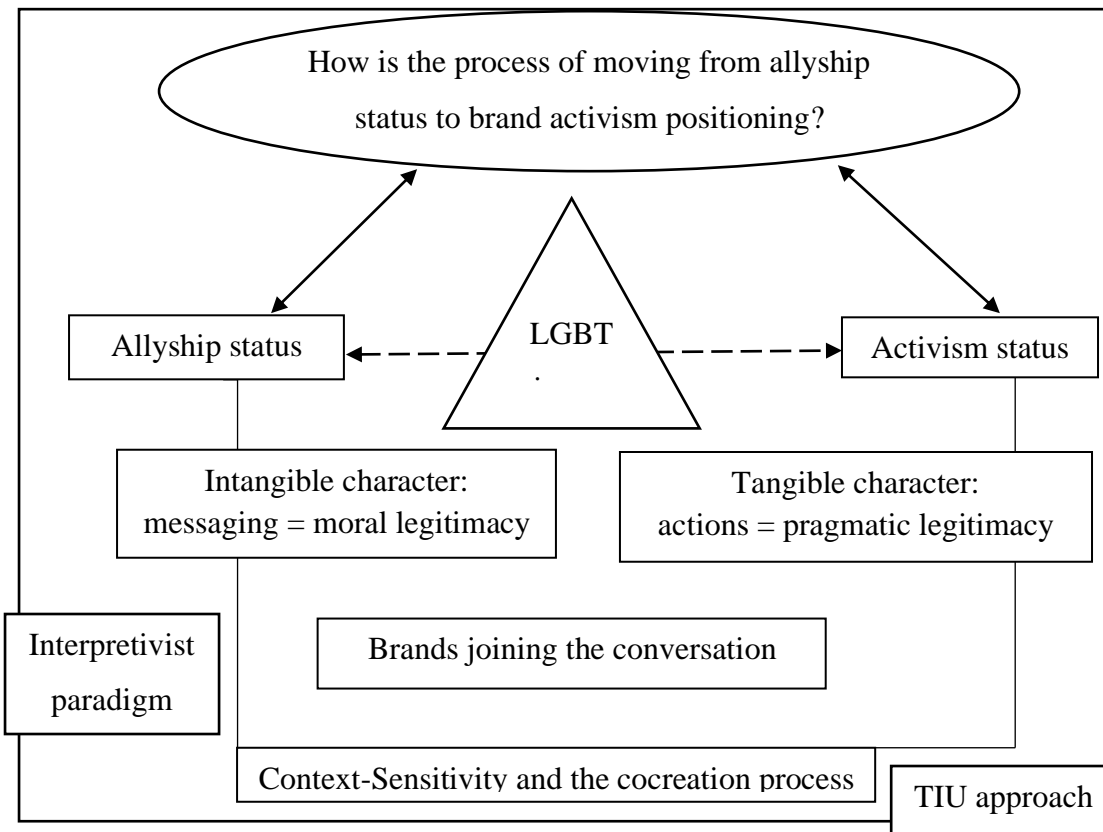
This conceptual model from the literature is the starting point to critically analyse our research propositions (see Table 25) and identify new insights in the light of our results.

Table 25. The Research Propositions

Research propositions
P1: Corporate LGBT messaging and advocacy to publicize corporate practices and policies potentially contribute to the necessary legitimacy for brands to become activists that successfully join the LGBT conversation during Pride month.
P2: Rainbow logos, Pride collections and rainbow-themed campaigns (Queer imagery) are instruments to support LGBT people, promoting the conversation about the LGBT cause and increasing awareness.
P3: The popularity of LGBT issues and the societal expectations from the brands positively affect the brands' willingness to take public stands for the causes, moving from allyship to activism.
P4: To meaningfully celebrate Pride, fulfil their political mission and avoid pinkwashing accusations, brands must conquer pragmatic and moral legitimacy.
P5: To be an activist brand within the LGBT context, putting a rainbow up for Pride month is a symbolic move from a broader strategic communication that pushes the brand's contribution forward and its contribution toward the LGBT conversation.

Achieving all six touchpoints for the 2021 and 2022 Pride campaigns seems almost impossible, according to our secondary data results analysis. Furthermore, symbols are highly used and combined with other popular elements such as partnerships, collaborations, products, and donations. Rainbow-themed campaigns during Pride can follow different paths with eclectic efforts. However, these different avenues share one goal: reinforce brand messaging and positionings through searching for connections with the audience, community and consumers.

There is a common ground between our participants, where internal and external commitments and changes become undeniably connected for brands to join the LGBT conversation with legitimacy. This common ground happens through words such as corporate ethos, culture, values, messages, actions, staff, stories, families, visibility, and awareness. Therefore, our primary data confirmed the premise that the literature identified as relevant for brands to gain and increase legitimacy: internal pragmatic dynamics or management. Internal commitment and change are the milestones to robust strategic communication and acting in public. In other words, internal support feeds external communication and marketing.

However, we must think about Proposition 1 with a **BUT** mindset.

This BUT comes in the Figure 8 circuit, where we understand our participants within the activism and association spheres have expectations that come with an implicit social validation of what brands do and what the regulators understand as reasonable. Additionally, celebrating Pride is one way of joining the LGBT conversation and must result from the brand's legitimacy to enter Pride. Hence, Pride is not the necessary beginning, ending or outcome. It is a piece of the process of being an ally and evolving into an activist brand. Consequently, when brands arrive at Pride month, internal support, community engagement, and collaborations and partnerships support become pillars to shield the storytelling and rainbow campaigns. However, the heart tends to be product-orientated and not prescriptive-based.

Symbolic and pragmatic dynamics, intangible and tangible efforts, saying and doing, or walking the walk and talking the talk. They all refer to the same guideline: doing or making it happen to have something to say, with short-term and long-term impacts.

Moreover, the new Proposition 1 underlines the fragmented formula or process presented in our primary and secondary data, which we represent in Table 26:

Table 26. The BUT process explanation.

Where to start	What it means	What stands for
Homework	Honesty and Inventory	Resources
Connect	Internally and externally	Empowerment, networking, belonging, and brand-community engagement
Ownership	Activate	Make it happen
Communicate	Something to Say	Awareness, visibility and influence
Validate	Legitimacy and authenticity	Authorized representation
Measure	The process	Think respect
Repeat	Necessary	Contribute for acceptance
Improve	Expectations and Practicality	Manage risks and processes

Combining our participant's perspectives, the 2021 and 2021 Pride campaigns, and the 8-typology circuits highlights, we achieve seven outcomes' brands must desire: belonging, visibility, empowerment, representation, acceptance, respect, and authenticity. To achieve them through the process in Table 25, brands must see the exchange between intrinsic and extrinsic stimuli to join the LGBT conversation. Hence, motivations are across all propositions. This framework allows us to understand if taking a stand on controversial

issues results from an impulse or a well-designed purpose and its motivations. Finally, it warns about the relevance of a careful approach to communicating corporate engagement with the LGBT conversation to avoid exploitation, pinkwashing, corporate hypocrisy, backlash or misalignment between promises, expectations, and outcomes.

As explained before, Proposition 2 purpose is to explore the access of brands to allyship and activism within the LGBT context and through Pride. Hence, it is vital to remember Proposition 1 outcome, where entering Pride month is just one of the possible avenues for purpose-driven brands. Furthermore, Queer Imagery or LGBT Symbols can go over Pride month and have different impacts according to the context. Rainbow goods and symbols lead the 8-typology results in 2021 and 2022. From the primary data, one significant conclusion arises: Brands avoid the Pride side of fighting and resistance Pride to celebrate joy, freedom and authenticity, which the secondary data confirms. Financial support and messaging become the prominent actions to contribute to a better world. Our results suggest the need to go beyond messaging and ensure harmony between message and practice for brands to be allies or activists. So, what distinguishes allyship and activism from the marketing perspective? In part, the type of efforts expected from brands.

The scepticism regarding Queer Imagery appropriation by brands clarifies that this is not enough as instruments of visibility, representation and awareness. However, it is a hit number one for campaigns and purpose-driven efforts to join the LGBT conversation. In other words, Queer imagery is mainly seen as an instrumental resource for performative awareness and needs a holistic approach to empower the conversation. Our participants highlight the need to listen to the community (locally and globally), which can occur through initiatives such as collaborations, giving space to representativeness and Queer voices, promoting employee resource groups, join and promote events, among other efforts. However, listening to the community and acting does not necessarily require being always vocal or vocal everywhere. The point is to defend the LGBT community, as stated by activist 12. A behind-the-scenes support is still joining the conversation. Also, Proposition 2 analysis suggests another directive: timing. Here, we talk about when brands decide to go silent or vocal, with Pride month being the mainstream occasion for brands to be loud and the rest of the year the mainstream time to go silent.

Moorman (2020) identifies seven degrees of brand activism, sharing one substantial core: action. Hence, brands become agents of social change and move from messaging to practice. In other words, our initial conceptual model draws from the claim that the type of efforts distinguishes brand allies from brand activists.

From Proposition 1 to Proposition 3, and in the light of the literature review and findings from our results, a triad comes up, made of expectations, validation (legitimisation) and pressures or tensions from and among stakeholders. This triad is inherently related to the brand-consumer new relationships and the outcomes of these new ways of engagement.

Our results illustrate the lack of consensus among participants regarding brands accessing the allyship and activism strongholds or joining the bandwagon. Generally, the findings explain that activism is taking allyship a step further, being on the frontline through actions, including lobbying, political pressure, and providing resources to the LGBT movement efforts, among others. And allyship is to stand with the community when something happens. Therefore:

Brand activism: being on the frontline with tangible and substantive actions to contribute to social-political change.

Brand allyship: standing with the LGBT community in polarised issues and when something happens or is happening.

Both concepts demand action and communication but structurally require different things. Also, brand activism is the sum of brand allyship pillars with the addition of more columns. It is a big step moving from one stronghold to the other. A brand does not need to be an activist to bring its message about LGBT acceptance and rights but needs to be an activist to contribute to lasting change. Activism is broader than messaging or advocacy.

The new brand-consumer relationship and the mainstream acceptance of the LGBT space influence the new brand-community engagement, increasing the willingness of brands to stand for polarised social issues and adhere to the bandwagon of private sector allyship and activism through corporate social responsibility and socially responsible marketing, mastering the language of digital activism locally and globally.

- Celebrating Pride in progressive countries is not activism, as it does not represent danger or risks, but celebrating Pride in conservative countries with anti-LGBT laws may be activism.
- Respect and acceptance are achievable through allyship. But to go further and to fight against prejudice, activism is necessary.
- Visibility and representativeness are two steps of allyship.
- Revolutionary thinking and pro-activeness are two demands of brand activism.

However, our findings show four different approaches to brand allyship and activism:

1. All brands can be activists.

2. Brands are not allies or activists but advocates, as they fear the political identity of polarised issues.

3. Brands are not allies or activists but corporate citizens with core values.

4. Brands are allies and do not need to be activists, but they could be if they dare to do so (courage).

Approaches one, two and four rely on one point: to join the activism bandwagon, brands must accept the political roots of polarised issues such as LGBT rights and acceptance and have the courage to go further. Approach three claims the alignment of brands with polarised issues makes them corporate citizens but not activists or allies. The literature (Moorman, 2020) sees corporate citizens as a degree of brand activism. Therefore, the brand commitment to LGBT respect, acceptance, visibility and representativeness is allyship, and the courage to accept the political roots of polarised issues is the first step to joining the activism bandwagon and taking allyship further.

Our findings from primary data show a clear pattern in Pride marketing campaigns: brands are mainly in the allyship stronghold when celebrating Pride, with a few exceptions, as the strategy core is compelling storytelling, promises and statements.

Connecting how brands celebrate Pride with their political mission is inaccurate. Moreover, our findings show that to celebrate Pride through marketing, brands have to apply moral and pragmatic dynamics and not conquer them, as they are the actions through

which brands pursue and gain legitimacy but not the end themselves. The first step is to understand the experience and meaning of Pride to the community. Activist 11 (Student Assistant in the Communication, Policy & Fundraising Department at Det Nationale Sorgcenter, Denmark) summarises this need in the following statement:

> *For companies, Pride is a party and an opportunity to make fun at company parties. For activism, it is a demonstration and a fight against discrimination, for rights and acceptance, and for people who can be themselves in their streets.*

Therefore, underlying this statement is the premise that Pride and Pride Month is not just marketing. It has a political heritage that businesses must honour when joining the conversation. So, it is what the community, or the regulators, understand as reasonable and how companies and brands manage these demands when adhering to the movement. Moral and pragmatic dynamics help brands throughout the process.

Along with these dynamics to gain legitimacy, our findings strengthen the significance of consistency and continuity in celebrating Pride. In other words, being an ally or activist is not something brands can switch on and off when suitable. It is unanimous that being vocal only during Pride month is to get the pink dollar, money laundry, performative allyship, not enough, inappropriate, and may hurt the community. Consequently, as shown through secondary data, some brands try to show their long-term commitment during Pride. Thus, Pride is an opportunity to show what companies have been doing and not the circumstance to do something. We can have two Pride and rainbow-marketing campaign approaches:

1. Produce rainbow goods and follow the herd.

2. Advocate for respect and equality, fight for liberation, demand progress, and engage with the community's struggles, victories, and experiences while producing rainbow goods.

Thus, there is a tension between the fight and the party dimensions of Pride and the relevance of brands to think about the tendency of brands to celebrate Pride and ignore the combative spirit of the conversation. These tensions are the real test of authenticity, and positive grades will give legitimacy to being active in the LGBT conversation. The journey of unpacking legitimacy does not need to be perfect. Here are the outcomes:

- Brands must live the values they are proclaiming.

- The process includes internal and external processes.
- There is an adherence to shared rules, standards, norms, or traditions of the market and community, such as the UN LGBTI standards.
- It is all about how brands take ownership to benefit the community.
- The right time to say something is when a brand's voice has an impact.
- Negotiate with the community and the consumers to join Pride Month and overpass distrust.
- Make a clear statement about publicly standing with the community for love, freedom, protests and parties all year.

In summary, brands celebrating Pride during June is the result of joining the LGBT conversation and one of the possible avenues to celebrate Pride. The way brands celebrate June depends on their moral and pragmatic dynamics in pursuing legitimacy and their relationship with the allyship and activism bandwagons. It can reinforce or harm the process of joining the LGBT conversation with positive outcomes for the brand and the community. So, the brand's approach to celebrating June depends on its moral and pragmatic dynamics in pursuing legitimacy and its relationship with the allyship and activism bandwagons.

It is imperative to explore brand-community engagement, the ability to make a positive difference in the LGBT people's lives, and must-have steps to develop and implement an actionable corporate plan with socially responsible marketing engaged with polarised issues. Therefore, contributing to the LGBT conversation requires:

- Brand-community engagement. We identified degrees such as financial resources, multilevel partnerships, connection, networking, public space, events, and third-party certifications.
- Identify and define the level and category of engagement with associations, services, projects, networks, or NGOs. It will influence the brand message and tone in the LGBT conversation.
- Work with partners and LGBT voices.
- Request expert support to prevent falling into traps and stereotypes.
- Articulate the community engagement with other typologies such as Queer Imagery, Product Orientations, LGBT fact, and collaborations and partnerships.

- Anticipate collaborators' and partners' scrutiny of the brands' motivations and work before acting in public.
- Anticipate the community and general scrutiny of the brands' public efforts to join the conversation.
- Work with other companies to do the homework and improve.
- Contribute to solving social problems, fight against prejudice, and push change and stereotypes.
- Awareness that the political roots of the LGBT movement demand pushing forward and not only advocacy before assuming the role of strategic social agents but without actions.
- Understand if brands have courage, are bold and are ready for sacrifices or if they aim to influence society and help understand inclusivity.
- Comprehending visibility and representation are essential but dangerous if overused.
- Slapping a rainbow for Pride or marketing the rainbow belongs to a broader plan of actionable tasks and commitments.

These requirements follow five umbrellas (homework, mobilisation, connection, empowerment, and outcomes). Accordingly, targeting allyship and activism market positionings and joining the LGBT conversation require brands to develop and implement an actionable plan with symbolic sensitiveness.

In summary, we can resume the reconceptualisation of our conceptual model in nine points and challenges:

Challenge 1
1. The new brand-consumer relationship and the mainstream acceptance of the LGBT space influence the new brand-community engagement, increasing the willingness of brands to stand for polarised social issues and adhere to the bandwagon of private sector allyship and activism through corporate social responsibility and socially responsible marketing, mastering the language of digital activism locally and globally.

Challenge 2

2. Allyship and activism market positions are not exact matches to the access of allyship and activism statuses. In other words, if the first relates to the stakeholder's strategic decision and initiatives to establish an image in consumers' minds, the second refers to a negotiation process full of tensions and validations between the brand and third-party regulators, where building alliances is mandatory.

Challenge 3

3. The brand commitment to LGBT respect, acceptance, visibility and representativeness is allyship, and the courage to accept the political roots of polarised issues is the first step to joining the activism bandwagon and taking allyship further.

Challenge 4

4. Long-term and context-sensitive internal support and commitment validate and encourage brands to publicly join the LGBT conversation with legitimacy and represent something real with strategic communication, marketing, and actionable plans where Pride is one of the possible avenues.

Challenge 5

5. Queer Imagery as a support and commitment effort of brands to the LGBT conversation can effortlessly be pinkwashing, demanding a holistic-based approach to increase awareness and empowerment. The marketing strategy belongs to an integrated communications plan, where the right amount of value with the combinations of different actions can enhance the value brands add to the conversation. The challenge is to use communication to boost the brand's position and status and not to create the perception of exploitation and inauthenticity.

Challenge 6

6. The brand's approach to celebrating June depends on its moral and pragmatic dynamics in pursuing legitimacy and its relationship with the allyship and activism bandwagons.

Challenge 7

7. The real test of authenticity relies on how brands manage the tensions between Pride's party and combative spirits and regulators' reasonable demands and business practicality, as celebrating Pride in June is one of the possible avenues to reinforce the brand commitment to LGBT rights and acceptance.

Challenge 8

8. Targeting allyship and activism market positionings and joining the LGBT conversation require brands to develop and implement an actionable plan with symbolic sensitiveness.

Challenge 9

9. Working with the supply chain to manage the allyship and activism market positionings and improve access to both statuses. Thus, marketers and communication professionals must tailor their marketing programs where the power of allyship and activism positionings is holistic-based and manages the new relationship between brands and consumers.

Accordingly, a new conceptual model arises (Figure 11). This model considers the literature review, the research problem, our findings, the research propositions and their critical analysis, and the nines challenges above point out.

Figure 21. The new conceptual model.

Celebrating Pride is the test of authenticity for brands: party versus combative tensions.

Socially Responsible Marketing and Corporate Social Responsibility

Pride is one avenue

Queer Imagery

Actionable plan with symbolic sensitiveness

New brand-consumer relations plus polarised social issues

Willingness to joining the LGBT conversation

Scope of Allyship

Scope of Activism

Market positioning

Degrees of access to

Represent something real

Allyship

Leap to

Activism

Tensions

Negotiation

Regulators validation

Scope of Allyship		Scope of Activism
Stand with the community	+	Be in the frontline
Respect	+	Resources
Acceptance	+	Revolutionary think
Visibility and awareness	+	Political roots
Internal Support	+	Courage
Intangible and tangible actions	+	Contribute to social change

Moral

Pragmatic

Legitimacy and legitimisation

Long-term and context-sensitive commitment

Strategic communication and messaging

Mastering digital activism locally and globally

Outcomes

Empowerment

Connection

Mobilisation

Homework

CHAPTER 7

7. Final Remarks and Contributions

Conceptualizing brand activism allows us to comprehend that joining Pride month celebrations is a nice-to-have step and not a must-have step into an actionable corporate plan with socially responsible marketing engaged with polarised issues.

In 2017, Kotler and Sarkar asked when brand activism became a thing. In 2023, our exploratory research with a TIU approach based on primary and secondary data, alongside the literature review and the current state of the art, served our purpose of being part of the construct hunting regarding brand activism. Moreover, we develop a conceptual model (see Figure 9) depicting Kotler and Sarkar's question and the private sector management to access allyship and activism through marketing, strategic communication, and corporate social responsibility in the context of LGBT conversation and Pride month celebrations. Our research shows that brands' access to allyship and activism must be inside an actionable business plan. It is not a marketing strategy to target the LGBT community or gain a gay-friendly label, considering it has a lot of questions and impacts internally and externally (see Figure 21).

We claim that brand activism became a thing as the brand-consumer relationship started to change, demanding more than just functional benefits from brands and companies. Also, Moorman's (2022) framework of brand activist degrees is relevant to explain how brands address activism and join the LGBT conversation. However, we don't follow Moorman's definition rooted in the partisan nature of brand activism. Instead, our findings evidence the necessity of combining this framework with the significant influence of authenticity and legitimacy to test the brand's commitments and support.

Additionally, our model shows that Eilert and Nappier Cherup's (2020) definition of brand activism identifies the core of a brand's engagement with polarised issues: the willingness to do it. Furthermore, this willingness to stand on controversial social or political matters (Mukherjee & Althuizen, 2020), and is the starting point for allyship. The big step to activism happens when brands dare to contribute to the future of society, fulfilling their

values-driven agenda (Kotler & Sarkar, 2017), aligning rhetoric with action to create social change (Vredenburg et al. 2020), assuming the political and combative roots of the LGBT movement and contexts, and representing something real. In summary, the brand activism bandwagon or scope adds new things to the allyship scope.

This essay shows that we must comprehend the new brand-consumer relations to understand brand activism. Also, brand allyship will define brand activism, meaning that the private sector needs to figure out what it means and imply to be an ally so it is ready to join the conversation and have an impact.

The LGBT communities, conversations and matters represent heterogeneous realities with different opportunities, traps and risks for the private sector. Communication is not the core of moving from allyship to activism. The bottom line relies on jumping from standing with the community to being on the frontline. The symbolic and substantive management cross the allyship and activism market positionings and accesses in the LGBT conversation. Long-term and context-sensitive commitment is vital as well. Strategic communication and messaging are mandatory for allyship and activism, influenced by moral and pragmatic dynamics.

Regarding Pride, our starting point relies on June as the kick-off for brands to join the LGBT conversation, influenced by the popularity of LGBT issues and the mainstream acceptance of Pride. Nonetheless, our findings highlight that Pride is not the kick-off but one possible avenue to join the LGBT conversation. The challenge in this avenue is how brands are celebrating Pride during June. Are they capable of managing the tensions between the party spirit of Pride and the combative structure of Pride as a fight for freedom? Are Pride marketing campaigns product-orientated and full of vague messaging or showing an engagement with the community and the internal alignment? The backbone of rainbow-themed campaigns is having something to say. This work is the first step to avoid pinkwashing and backlash. Also, having something to say validates authenticity, where communication plays a significant role. However, brands must be careful about how they communicate. It can easily fall into the trap of being perceived as exploitation. This caution applies also to using Queer Imagery or rainbow goods.

Finally, different voices and roles in the LGBT community mean different perspectives on brand activism and brand access to allyship and activism. Therefore, attempts to engage

with the community and comprehend the multi-experience of Queerness may improve the private sector's legitimacy to join the LGBT conversation and celebrate Pride. The question behind this is always: How does your plan impact and benefit the community?

Instead of proposing a brand activism framework and identifying different ways brands can get involved in LGBT issues as allies and activists, we provide a conceptual model with theoretical and managerial implications that give guidelines to develop an actionable corporate plan to successfully stand for polarised social issues and join the LGBT conversation, reinforce the new brand-consumer relations and fulfil regulators expectations.

This research provides both academics and practitioners with relevant contributions. The two subchapters below explore our work's theoretical and managerial implications.

7.1.   Theoretical implications

Regarding theoretical implications, we adopted the Institutional Theory of Corporate Social Responsibility (Campbell, 2007), Moorman (2020) degrees of activist brands, brand activism fragmented definitions, Vredenburg et al. (2020) understanding of brand activism, and a TIU approach as background to build marketing theory and develop a conceptual model about brand activism within the LGBT conversation and Pride month celebrations.

Authenticity and legitimacy emerge as significant dimensions in this theoretical background. In our research, both concepts are relevant to comprehending how brands must join the LGBT conversation to avoid traps and accusations of hypocrisy or pinkwashing. Authenticity contributes to understanding brand engagement. Legitimacy represents the consequence of fulfilling the regulator's expectations when standing with the LGBT community in a non-stop exchange dynamic. These expectations go beyond what Mirzaei et al. (2022) identify as the expectation of fighting against prejudice when brands assume an activist positioning.

Our findings show that to celebrate Pride through marketing, brands have to apply moral and pragmatic dynamics and not conquer them, as they are the actions through which brands pursue and gain legitimacy but not the end themselves. Hence, the first step in the legitimisation process is to understand the experience and meaning of Pride to the community when a brand decides to get involved in Pride Month. Why? Our findings show

that Pride and Pride Month is not just marketing. It has a political heritage that brands must honour when joining the conversation. This theoretical contribution is particularly relevant for brands within the legitimisation process and not necessary in the positioning process, as the legitimisation process relies on the informal regulator's decisions (referring to the activists and associations within the LGBT community, as already explained above). It is about the regulator's understanding of what is reasonable and how companies and brands manage these demands when adhering to the movement.

As far as we know, this study was a precursor to applying an exploratory lens to brand activism construct in the context of LGBT movements and issues. Therefore, our conceptual model provides a significant background to understand brands placing as allies and activists as they address LGBT issues and Pride experiences. Nonetheless, our conceptual model suggests a necessity to improve the expectation-confirmation flow between regulators, communication and the private sector. Hence, strategic communication is not the engine behind the process of moving the brand from allyship to activism but to represent something real. Accordingly, legitimacy, gained through moral and pragmatic dynamics, has a positive and significant influence on how brands celebrate Pride in June. Legitimacy is also crucial to how the community welcomes these celebrations.

So, what distinguishes allyship and activism from the marketing perspective? In part, the type of efforts expected from brands. The other part is the triad of expectations, validation (legitimisation) and pressures or tensions from and among stakeholders. This contribution is the kick-off for future research about brands strategically positioning themselves as allies or activists within polarising social issues and in which the LGBT matters fit. Our understanding is context-sensitive and results from an exploratory study. We identify the following distinctions:

- **Brand allyship**: standing with the LGBT community in polarised issues and when something happens or is happening. Brands target the outcomes of visibility, awareness, representation, respect, belonging, acceptance, and authenticity. Expectations and tensions are lower than in the brand activism sphere.
- **Brand activism**: being on the frontline with tangible and substantive actions to contribute to social-political change. Brands add a new outcome to the ones targeted as allies: empowerment. To achieve this outcome, brands not only use

strategic communication, messaging, or marketing but also allocate resources, dare to assume the political roots of polarising issues (including Pride month) and become social agent agents with the necessary influence to help solve societal problems (Porter and Kramer, 2011), fight against prejudice, push change and overcome stereotypes. Expectations and tensions are higher than in the brand allyship sphere.

Therefore, it is not about the type of commitment or how brands use communication. It is about promises, expectations, and outcomes. Through the analysis of Pride marketing campaigns, we see brands are mainly in the allyship stronghold when celebrating Pride, with a few exceptions, as the strategy core is compelling storytelling, promises and statements. Additionally, allyship measurement may occur through digital marketing metrics, for example. However, activism demands more. Sometimes, requests the courage to assume that the brand is creating long-term impact is almost impossible to measure.

The brand's willingness to join the LGBT conversation results from the new brand-consumer relations and expectations. Therefore, based on Moorman's (2020) model and Vredenburg et al. (2020) insights, expectations, perceived alignment between rhetoric and work, internal and external communication, Pride marketing campaigns and having something to say, context and symbolic sensitiveness arise as relevant elements to considers. Moreover, in the digital context, the website information and social media campaigns impact how brands join the conversation, pursue legitimacy and are perceived as authentic.

We confirm the relationship between long-term commitments, alignment between messaging and actions, and condemnation of inauthentic activist brands by consumers, previously supported by various researchers (e.g., Moorman, 2020; Schmidt et al. 2022; Vredenburg et al. 2020; Xu & Zhoub, 2020). Therefore, the higher the brand messages concerning LGBT matters and Pride celebrations, the higher the tendency to create expectations, increasing the necessity of representing something real from two perspectives: meet the community needs and do the work before communicating. The brand's willingness to stand up for LGBT matters, new brand consumer themselves as allies and eventually jump to activism. Accordingly, our work addresses several challenges regarding brand activism within the LGBT context, namely:

1. Increase the attention on brands tapping the LGBT community (Rigdon, 1991; Tuten, 2006) through marketing campaigns and allyship or activism programmes. This attention contributes to developing an academic topic with little attention (Li, 2022; Oakenfull, 2013), including the factors behind the perception of authentic activist brands or hypocritical brands (Miguel & Miranda, 2023).

2. Comprehend the criteria from LGBT voices and management professionals to define how brands access allyship and activism. It results from the lack of elements to construe LGBT-friendly brands (Ciszek, 2017; Oakenfull, 2013; Sibai et al. 2021; Tuten, 2006; Vredenburg et al. 2020);

3. Most corporate social responsibility advertising studies have examined less controversial social issues (Sheehan & Berg 2018). Accordingly, our essay addresses a polarising issue in many geographies: LGBT rights and acceptance.

4. To answer the scepticism concerning brand activism within the LGBT context, which has been left unanswered (Vredenburg et al. 2020).

5. To produce new knowledge about the relationship between brand participation and social change.

In line with the research of Vredenburg et al. (2020) regarding the relevance of having aligned corporate practices that uphold brand purpose and values, we confirm this assumption as internal commitment and change are the milestones to robust strategic communication and acting in public. Indeed, internal support and messaging contribute to authentic brands contributing to polarising issues. Also, our research adds a new element, or the BUT directive, as we identified in Proposition 1. More than the urgency of having internal work feeding external communication and marketing, the results confirm that brands must do or make it happen (their values-driven agenda or actionable plan) to have something to say, with short-term and long-term impacts. In other words, we confirm the literature review claiming that producing rainbow goods without talking about LGBT struggles and experiences is questionable. This confirmation finds echo in several ideas suggested by other researchers, such as:

1. Purpose-driven brands willing to stand on polarising issues must connect their discourses with contextual realities and pursue an open and long commitment (De Miguel-Zamora et al. 2022).

2. Representing something real enables brands to engage empathetically with consumers (Castelló-Martínez, 2019).

3. Brand activism creates value for customers (Martin & Burpee, 2022).

4. Brands should get involved with social-political issues when there is an alignment between messaging and practice to authentically connect with people (Mirzaei et al. 2022; Moorman, 2020; Vredenburg et al. 2020).

5. Brands must stay true to a market position (Becker et al. 2019).

Our study identifies the internal work as the stronghold for brands to stay true to a position, explaining why brand activism drifted from CSR to become something else. Offering the best product is insufficient. Offering the best story is no longer enough. Contributing to a better world is the new test for brand allyship and activism. We understand the relevance of UN LGBTI Standards to achieve both market positionings in consumers' minds: allyship and activism. The significance of a consistent and authentic market positioning spreads to the brand access to the LGBT conversation and Pride month celebrations. Market positionings and brand access to the LGBT people and conversation rely on tensions, negotiations, and the regulator's validity (see Figure 9). Our study explains how brands can achieve allyship and activism market positioning and access to the ally and activist statuses. Despite having different goals and paths, the process is inseparable. The more engaged, consistent and authentic the positioning strategy is, the more effective the business and marketing strategy and the access to allies and activism will be. Additionally, our research produces new insights regarding how brands access the ally status, integrating the overall scholarship interested in studying allyship and ally status (Minei et al. 2023; Eichler, 2010; Lim et al. 2019). However, we go a step further by examining the marketing process of this market positioning and status within the LGBT conversation and in a permanent connection to the activist messages and practices.

Our research contributes to understanding the significance of consistency and continuity in celebrating Pride, joining the LGBT conversation, and entering the enormous and complex

legitimacy market. It is unanimous that being an ally or activist is not something brands can switch on and off when suitable, and Pride is one way to go to the legitimacy market. How? Through two approaches, according to our findings:

- Produce rainbow goods and follow the herd.
- Advocate for respect and equality, fight for liberation, demand progress, and engage with the community's struggles, victories, and experiences while producing rainbow goods.

Different approaches generate different outcomes. The second approach reflects one substantial contribution to actionable business plans with marketing actions to join the LGBT conversation and access the allyship or activism statuses: TENSIONS. Which tensions?

- Between the fight and the party dimensions of Pride. And the relevance of brands to think about the tendency of brands to celebrate Pride and ignore the combative spirit of the conversation.
- Between regulators: This tension refers to expectations and perspectives of what is reasonable.
- Between LGBT regulators and business stakeholders regarding doing and telling. This tension refers to the different expectations, demands, and perspectives from LGBT voices or informal regulators and stakeholders, such as shareholders, employees, suppliers, partners, and consumers.

Having positive grades will give legitimacy to being active in the LGBT conversation.

This research suggests the new conceptual model developed after discussing our initial five research propositions to comprehend the new strategic communication practices growing at the intersection of the corporate world, activism, and politics (Manfredi-Sánchez, 2019), where Pride, in June, becomes one possible avenue but not the only one. This intersection increases the risk of generating polarised responses and alienating customers. Accordingly, Wagner et al. (2009) argue that engaging with causes in inauthentic ways generates backlash and corporate hypocrisy. Authenticity arises as a potential form to achieve success. However, the truthfulness of this claim still requires empirical verification (Becker et al. 2019), as the authenticity definition is not consensual among researchers. From our findings, we identify the relevance of the six authenticity components of Nunes

et al. (2021), boosted by the continuity and consistency elements (Miguel & Miranda, 2023; Schallehn et al. 2014) and the desire for the real (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010).

The present research confirms the connection between the eight developed typologies (LGBT facts, Queer Imagery, Product Orientation, time-space, internal support, collaborations and partnerships, engagement with the community, and ague messaging) with scopes of allyship and activism. However, as our participant's different experiences tell, the brand's access to both positionings is not unanimous, demanding more research from three sides: private sector, consumers, and community.

In this sense, the interactions between typologies are crucial as they can be pinkwashing (Clements, 2017), demanding a holistic approach to increase awareness and empowerment. Our findings suggest brands are mainly in the allyship stronghold when celebrating Pride, with a few exceptions, as the strategy core is compelling storytelling, promises and statements. Additionally, Pride is an opportunity to show what companies have been doing and not the circumstance to do something. It is unanimous that being vocal only during Pride month is performative.

In summary, the conceptual model resulting from our findings is a journey for brands willing to stand on polarising issues, with many outcomes, including:

- Brands must live the values they are proclaiming.
- The process includes internal and external dynamics.
- There is an adherence to shared rules, standards, norms, or traditions of the market and community, such as the UN LGBTI standards.
- It is all about how brands take ownership to benefit the community.
- The right time to say something is when a brand's voice has an impact.
- Negotiate with the community and the consumers to join Pride Month and overpass distrust.
- Make a clear statement about publicly standing with the community for love, freedom, protests and parties all year.

Finally, this research provides continuity to the studies linking CSR and brand activism but takes the brand's purpose-driven agendas to the company's business models. We believe this research has contributed to a better understanding of this complex phenomenon.

7.2.   Managerial implications

In terms of managerial contributions, this research provides valuable implications and insights about managing brand access to allyship and activism within the LGBT conversation and through Pride marketing campaigns.

The conceptual model aims to pique the attention of business managers and marketers for the complexity of joining the conversation, trying to clarify the significance and relevance of legitimacy, authenticity, expectations, and communication. Accordingly, we suggest key steps to develop an actionable business plan with a purpose-driven agenda and symbolic sensitiveness.

First of all, brand managers, marketers and managers need to understand that the process of brands accessing and becoming sources of allyship and activism is impactful but recent, increasing the complexity of the strategy. According to the results, the credibility given to these positionings affects the outcomes. In other words, legitimacy and authenticity are two parts of the same engine to join the LGBT conversation. Allyship and activism go beyond Pride month or the willingness to stand for polarised issues. Both scopes demand doing and communicating, impacting community reactions and pushing forward the conversation on LGBT rights and acceptance. Additionally, our findings show that the conversation is a long-term and context-sensitive commitment. These directives, as explained in the circuit for truthful alignment with the LGBT conversation (see Figure 8) and the new conceptual model (see Figure 9), generate additional changes, as brands need to master the digital activism language locally and globally while engaging with social movements.

Therefore, brand managers should be attentive to the motivations behind the willingness to join the conversation. This attention aligns with Kotler and Sarkar's (2017) questions regarding brands pushing forward change, including:

- Does the client care?
- Will they believe that the brand is authentic?
- Will it raise prices?
- Do leaders see why it makes a difference?

Simon (2011) claims that brands do not want to do the work, creating symbolic actions to solve social problems. Therefore, brands invest in Queer Imagery and rhetoric, small gestures to engage with an audience without alienating potential consumers. When brands build the expectation that they will fight against prejudice, doing the bare minimum is dangerous. Hence, our findings reinforce what the literature claims: the private sector must go beyond advocacy or messaging (Wettstein and Baur, 2016) to achieve activist status and invest in:

- Substantive actions and policies (Kapitan et al. 2019).
- Donations (Crimmins & Horn, 1996)
- Partnerships (Duane & Domegan, 2019; Miguel & Miranda, 2023).
- Third-party certifications (Miguel & Miranda, 2023).

Our results suggest five categories of private sector engagement with LGBT voices:

- Financial resources: Sponsor and donate to local, regional, national or worldwide associations and NGOs.
- Multilevel partnerships: Include several aspects, from donations and sponsorship to message deliveries, employee voluntarism, internal events, and the co-creation of products or collections.
- Raising awareness, which includes visibility, representation and space.
- Connection: Uses personal stories and testimonials.
- Networking and community engagement: Dialogue with the community.

Collaborations and partnerships influence how brands engage with the community, define the message, position in the marketplace and embracer the social issue. This strong influence also has one key pattern: brands use LGBT voices to spread a message, including associations, artists, celebrities, influencers, activists, historical names of the movement, employees, anonymous, and others. So, when studying how to join the LGBT conversation, our findings provide five degrees of engagement:

1. Provide the spotlight on the LGBT+ community and their allies.

2. Participation in Pride events.

3. Promoting activities all year round.

4. Donations to LGBT+ players.

5. Workplace and workforce stories and initiatives.

As Galan-Ladero (2013) argues, donations influence brand positioning regarding activism, and our results align with this idea. Accordingly, financial contributions arise as relevant decisions to define how brands celebrate Pride, join the LGBT conversation, pursue legitimacy, choose causes within the broad spectrum of the LGBT movement, and move ahead with collaborations and partnerships. Finally, the financial support is intrinsically connected to rainbow-themed campaigns, collections, or goods. Thus, brands must define how to manage all these elements to show impact in the community while pursuing marketing and business metrics and goals.

Companies should understand that their legitimacy and authenticity, or reputation if we want to, depend on how they communicate and what they have to say or share. In this sense, we emphasise an idea that some research participants defend: the private sector and activists are not friends. They depend on each other to fulfil goals, agendas, plans, and expectations. They are co-dependents and share exchangeable assets in the complex legitimacy market where marketing wants to play. Hence, connecting this perspective of the legitimacy market with pinkwashing and corporate hypocrisy, the private sector must work with associations to speak up without falling into traps and getting backlash from the community.

Pride campaigns, websites and social media channels, rainbow-themed campaigns, or other marketing actions must provide objective information and not [only] vague messaging. To go from allyship to activism and making a difference requires accepting the discomfort of assuming the political roots of the LGBT movement (see Figure 8). The point is what position the brands aim to adopt and communicate. Our results suggest two main possibilities, mirrored in our conceptual model (Figure 9):
- Brands are allies of change, giving resources and influence.
- Brands are activists of change, being vocal even in adverse contexts and the possibility of facing negative reactions provoked by a hostile social-political ambience.

As suggested by Hughes (2006) and Olson (2017), brand activism is now more commercial (Hughes, 2006; Olson, 2017), relying on strategic communication to impart social change (Ciszek, 2017). Exploring Ciszek's (2017) claim, activism is a form of strategic communication that produces meaning and creates discourses for social change. So, brands are not activists if they ignore their strategic social agent's role (Schoenberger-Orgad, 2011). Consequently, and explaining it through our results, when discomfort and the symbolic dynamic of legitimacy win, the idea of brands contributing to the LGBT conversation is romantic.

Our findings add a common ground between activists that brands must consider and make a practical contribution to the DE&I (diversity, equity, and inclusion) path. This common ground insists that the private sector is not making a lasting difference and accessing the activist status: They [the brands] are not ready or willing to lose on behalf of the progress. Hence, starting socially responsible marketing to reach ally status and eventually activist condition may require raising the following question: Do you have the courage to make a real difference and contribute to change in the LGBT dialogue?

To answer this question, brands must consider the context-sensitiveness of the social issue. The danger and the safety of being an LGBT activist varies according to the geographical scope and the performer. It is different if the role belongs to an individual or a brand. Activists argue that individuals require courage, sacrifice, and boldness. Brands may influence society and help to understand inclusivity but do not generate change. Symbolic wins are representation in the media or marketing campaigns and casts, which is not far-reaching.

Therefore, brands are social agents when the pragmatic dynamic of legitimacy and revolutionary thinking wins (Schoenberger-Orgad, 2011). Our findings identify several actions to achieve this role, including producing meaning, creating discourses for social change (Ciszek, 2017), standing up for human rights, acting in the public sphere, and going beyond symbols. Hence, our findings show the decisiveness of combining awareness, visibility and representation with acceptance and respect or influence with activation, connection and empowerment.

Recalling the UN LGBTI standards, brands must consider the critical role of five wheels: workplace, time, support, marketplace and community. Communication, strategy, and

marketing give the public space to ongoing work inside and outside companies and their brands.

Finally, as a conclusion and beyond the propositions and research model implications, this research study also sought to draw the attention of brands, managers, and communities to digital activism and new expectations from brand-consumer relationships. Before expecting to increase purchase intent, brand awareness and loyalty, or sales, brands must define a clear strategy for an active presence in the LGBT conversation. If social movement and digital activism proximity is a relatively new phenomenon (George & Leidner, 2019), and if brand activism is flexible enough to be digitally mediated or enter traditional activism, brands must consider all channels and possibilities when assuming activist positions.

Brands must improve their marketing strategy and approach to the LGBT conversation, especially their relationships with LGBT communities, contexts, and experiences, to exceed expectations, overcome distrust, and provide reasonable outcomes from the regulator's perspective. Our findings show the legitimisation process is about the regulator's understanding of what is reasonable and how companies and brands manage these demands when adhering to the movement. However, there are still many opportunities to further investigate, such as: What are the different standards and regulations across all the stakeholders in the LGBT community? How can brands practically manage them with their business goals, missions and stakeholders' expectations and demands? How can brands assess the regulator's perspectives about what is reasonable?

Indeed, it is applying what Brickell (2000) and (Browne (2007) explain about Pride to the bigger picture and conversation: Pride events are attempts to claim public space and challenge dominant attitudes towards homosexuality (Brickell, 2000; Browne, 2007).

Therefore, our results allow us to develop a socially responsible marketing strategy to join the LGBT conversation and celebrate Pride through a step-by-step method, where putting a rainbow for Pride or marketing the rainbow belongs to a broader plan of actionable commitments, pushing the brand's contribution forward and its contribution toward the LGBT conversation.

Our suggestion is a business plan where communication is one of the wheels. Finally, brands must manage the must-have and nice-to-have axes, considering short-term and long-term impacts. This business plan with an actionable heart follows the following steps:

1. Think the timeline and timing: Position the company and the brand on the LGBT dialogue at different times of the year and not just in Pride. Goal: Avoid pinkwashing and the following backlash through long-term commitments.

2. Design, implement and manage workplace programs to fulfil this commitment in all countries where the company is active: Includes HR policies of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Elaborate on the programs collaborating with associations or NGOs. Goal: Pay attention to all employees, support them and give platforms to be themselves and comfort while being themselves.

3. Integrate the workforce and the workplace rather than assimilate: Having staff onboard. Otherwise, companies might be chasing diversity instead of inclusion. Goal: Prepare and mobilise the company and its people to eliminate discrimination, fight against prejudice, provide support, and empower diversity. Remember that the regulators are not only external LGBT voices and people but also the workforce and suppliers.

4. Involve the C-level of the company and the management roles. Goal: Making inclusive leadership visible empowers listening and dissemination, avoids absent C-level, and ensures a genuine and authentic commitment.

5. Supply chain diversity and prevent human rights violations. Goal: Purchase a minimum quantity from LGBT businesses and do not discriminate against LGBT suppliers, distributors, or customers. Ensure that partners do the same.

6. Work with specialists to learn, listen and talk to LGBT associations, activists, and other voices. Goal: Provide flexible support to local or context needs and challenges.

7. Engage with the community by allocating resources and time to initiatives, events, policies, statements, lobbying, and other actions.

8. Identify international business standards, programmes, culture assessments, third-party certifications, collaborations and partnerships to go further, such as UN LGBTI business standards, Pride 365 Certification, Diversity Champions Programme, and Corporate Equality Index.

9. Marketing and merchandising the rainbow: Showing the company LGBT+ diversity in campaigns, above the line and below the activities, celebrating Pride, and using Queer Imagery. Goal: meaningful visibility and representation. The decision to celebrate Pride is in step 9 but results from the complete business plan. Our findings suggest that celebrating Pride is not a baby step or the first step in a marketing move as it demands companies, for instance, to conquer legitimacy and to make decisions such as if they want to assume the political voice of the LGBT movement, be authentic and conquer a condition of ally or even activist.

10. Communicate.
    a. Work with specialists to manage the LGBT conversation and do reasonable things.
    b. Respect Queer multi-experiences.
    c. Listen and engage with the LGBT community.
    d. Timeline. Avoid a complicit silence throughout the year.
    e. Proofs. Verify if the company is doing well internally (work culture) and show evidence of the commitment to the LGBT community inside the four walls of the company and outside.
    f. Avoid generic and vague messaging. Choose the right message and messengers.
    g. Identify the collective pain points. Chat with other companies already doing the work, the people in the community, and the associations or NGOs to understand where their pain points are and how to help.
    h. Promote points of contact and conversation internally and externally to think about the impact the company is having and how to support the LGBT movement.
    i. Bring visibility, representation, respect, and acceptance to the marketing campaigns, casts, and messages.

11. Share the learnings: Empower and collaborate with other purpose-driven businesses.

12. Be careful with measuring results: Identifying the outcomes from joining the conversation to provoke or help provoke change is challenging. Our participants indicate three visions regarding the "We made this happen" needs:

- If the goal is to be a champion of change, companies must accept that they are creating or helping create soft progress and will not look to statistical and tangible wins. Time-space might be relevant. Association 5 (Executive Director at GiveOut, UK) explains by giving the Levi's example:

In the case of Levi's, it has provided long-term support and supported two of our urgent appeals. So, there is a tangible example of Levi's giving money to support life rescuing of LGBT lives or people and difficult places.

- If the goal is to understand if the brand perception by consumers aligns with the brand's identity, ask through brand studies.
- If the goal is to have data to make decisions, for example, regarding launching new Pride campaigns, consider social media metrics and other digital marketing metrics, money raised, and sales incomes from rainbow-themed collections or goods.

So, do before telling, and consider five essential umbrellas: homework, mobilisation, connection, empowerment, and outcomes. The term ally often implies identity rather than action (Carlson et al. 2019), while the activism concept demands change.

In summary, we provide a tracking model for brands to pursue their ally or activist market positioning and statuses (Figure 22).

Figure 22. Tracking the brand ally and activist positionings and statuses in the LGBT conversation
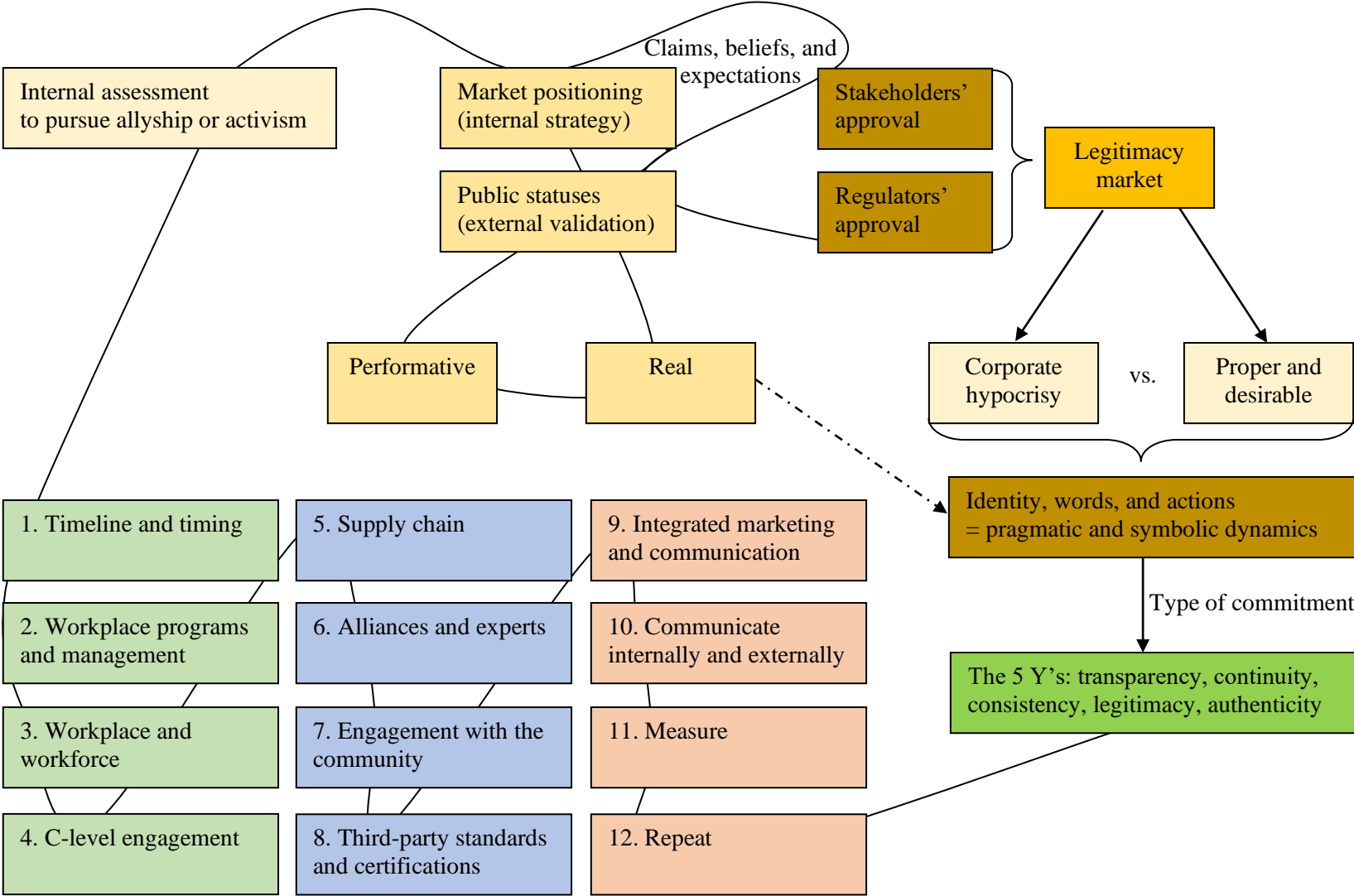
7.3. Limitations and Future Research

This research relies on a rich, fragmented, and young theoretical background. The research project has limitations, which we present. We also explain them and provide guidelines and avenues for future research projects.

The first limitation lies in the process of data collection. The data was obtained through a small, purposeful and non-random sample (Cohen et al. 2007), which limits the generalizability of the results. According to our final result (see Table 11), we lack participants in the inside marketers and DEI managers category. Also, our participants are mainly from the Western World or Northern Hemisphere, namely from Portugal, the UK, the USA, Spain, Canada, and the Netherlands. In this sense, our research purpose is to verify the existence of a phenomenon (Van Maanen, 1988) and not to make generalisations, rejecting this goal (Denzin, 1983), developing a body of knowledge and a conceptual model within a specific context. The sample made it possible to create a picture of what is perceived and considered important from the perspective of these research participants. Finally, it is limited to the replies received, representing only a slice of the full diversity of visions and approaches to the private sector engaging with the LGBT conversation. Future research should use a balanced proportion of geographical contexts, professional roles, and LGBT voices. Also, it should use more heterogeneous samples to compare perspectives, experiences, and contexts.

Secondly, we proceed our work through exploratory research with a TIU approach, a qualitative lens and an interpretative paradigm. Hence, our results are descriptive and interpretative. We are unable to make causal claims. However, our results suggest a robust and significant association between LGBT issues, brand access to allyship and activism, and Pride Month celebrations. The situatedness of knowledge (Willis, 2007) also opens a future window to explore the brand's access to allyship and activism through Pride Month, for example, in other realities and with voices.

The third limitation results from our research model, based on content analysis and in-depth interviews, originating research constructs and knowledge inherently related to our participants and secondary data sample. Applying triangulation of sources and methods allows us to improve our conclusions and decrease possible bias (Williams, 2000). However, a future avenue for brand activism studies should use mixed methods research to

address criteria such as replicability, reliability and validity from a qualitative approach and improve the causal aspect of results. Quantitative data could complement and contribute to a broader perspective of the phenomenon.

Fourthly, our research identifies the potential exclusion of relevant structures and mechanisms in the conceptual framework, mirrored in our conceptual model and axial coding pass. Therefore, the last question asks if there is anything else to add. The risk of missing issues about the underlying structures and mechanisms during coding decreases as far as possible.

The fifth limitation relates to our biases as researchers that may influence the process. This corruption is reduced through our interactions with prior literature and data collection during the development of the initial conceptual model. The non-neutrality of our work influences our reflexive methodological design, which is crucial to trustworthy research and includes the following criteria:

a) The development of constructs and the conceptual model in situ;

b) The understanding of the data is in its particular context, as we have constitutive understandings of causality;

c) Data is co-created in the field through relationships between the researcher and participants.

The sixth limitation is the unstructured and flexible research design (Malhotra, 2010), providing little attention to cultural, moral, and legal differences between countries. The geographical, political and ideological impact on knowledge and social reality is acknowledged but not addressed. Future research could understand how brands join the conversation considering these impacts and how the expectations may have different degrees of demand and scrutiny.

The seventh limitation comes from the selection of Pride campaigns to analyse. This selection occurred based on Instagram feed publications. From this starting point, the brand selection was random. Thus, future researchers should try to study other brands and Pride campaigns with a broader time-space, once we only considered rainbow-themed initiatives in June of 2021 and 2022. Eventually, it could be worth exploring other technologies or

digital channels and understanding the link between digital and offline initiatives to join the LGBT conversation.

This research follows Pride initiatives to understand how brands join the LGBT conversation. Considering our findings, future researchers should look to the entire year to explore the private sector engagement with the community.

On the other hand, we developed brand-oriented research and didn't distinguish between B2B brand activism (Kapitan et al. 2022) and B2C brand activism. Consequently, consumer-oriented studies are a future avenue of research for the phenomenon, considering the role of expectations and the new brand-consumer relations in the brand's willingness to join polarised issues. Additionally, prior literature argues that socially responsible brands influence purchase intention (Chang & Cheng, 2015) and brand image (Du et al. 2007), have the potential to create misaligned stakeholders (Moorman, 2020), and can lead to radical attitudes from consumers such as punishing the brand (Hong & Li, 2021). These brand attitudes result from familiarity, confidence, and trust in a brand (Hashem et al. 2023). Hence, future research should consider cross-brand-consumer approaches and comparisons to answer the scepticism concerning brand activism within the LGBT context, which has been left unanswered (Vredenburg et al. 2020).

Considering the never-stopping dynamics of the LGBT movement and the tensions between authentic and performative allyship and activism, it might be worth empirically exploring the conceptual model developed during this research considering different contexts, commitments, business and marketing plans, and consumers, considering Suchman's (1995) vision of legitimacy as a negotiation among consumers regarding the actions of a corporation. Our research emphasises the relevance of tensions to develop actionable business plans with marketing actions to join the LGBT conversation and access the allyship or activism statuses. These tensions are relevant to future research as they arise as the test of authenticity and legitimacy. Having positive grades will give legitimacy to being active in the LGBT conversation, and there is a lack of knowledge about these tests and assessments that research can explore.

Despite a rich literature on corporate social responsibility, legitimacy, authenticity, activism, and marketing, there is not a deep insight into how brand activism works, as suggested by Miguel and Miranda (2023), Li (2022) and (Oakenfull (2013). This situation

can be due to most corporate social responsibility advertising studies that have examined less controversial social issues (Sheehan & Berg 2018), with researchers focused on strategic and socially responsible communication. Future research could produce new knowledge about the relationship between brand participation, social change and polarising issues in different geographies. It applies to LGBT rights and other movements or social-political issues, including Black Lives Matter, Me Too, and Stop Asian Hate.

As referred, our findings identify the internal work as the stronghold for brands to stay true to a position and confirm the literature review claiming that producing rainbow goods without talking about LGBT struggles is questionable. This confirmation echoes with other researchers, such as Becker et al. (2019), Castelló-Martínez (2019), De Miguel-Zamora et al. (2022), Martin and Burpee (2022), Mirzaei et al. (2022), Moorman (2020) and Vredenburg et al. (2020). However, it is necessary to continue investigating how and why brands access allyship and activism through legitimisation, becoming sources of both. Future research is relevant to clarify common assertions and fragmentation in the marketing literature and strategic communication studies as conceptualisations create unclear scopes about brand activism. For instance:

- Brand activism is deeply connected with strategic communication that produces meanings and creates discourses for social change (Schoenberger-Orgad, 2011).

- The common ground and difference between corporate social responsibility, cause-related marketing, woke activism, and corporate socio-political activism are blurred. Wettstein and Baur (2016) distinguish brand activism and CSR, but the study of Vredenburg et al. (2020) draws authentic brand activism from CSR literature. Our research shows activists became something more than CSR, improved by its social change core. Regarding cause-related marketing, Brønn and Vrioni (2001) see it as a rational decision, and Galan-Ladero (2013) identify several types of CRM programs, including donation, who pays it, number of products, corporations and associations involved, duration, geographical scope, cause supported, and the media used. Our findings show brand activists relate to this rational decision, demanding an actionable business plan but pushing it forward as joining polarised issues also requires symbolic and moral sensitiveness. Woke activism happens when brands engage with controversial matters (Mirzaei et al.

2022) and is related to corporate socio-political activism (Bhagwat et al. 2020). Corporate social responsibility demands societal consensus, corporate socio-political activism depends on the stakeholders' values (Bhattacharya & Elsbach, 2002), and brand activism fits all conceptualisations. However, they are insufficient to comprehend the construct or explore the jump from allyship to activism and the respective courage to accept the political roots of unresolved social matters.

Our research claims that what distinguishes allyship and activism, from the marketing perspective, lives in the type of efforts the community expects from brands and in the triad of expectations, validation (legitimisation) and pressures from stakeholders. The leap from both statuses is not about the type of commitment or the use of communication. It is about promises, expectations, and outcomes. The results show a core strategy: brands seek compelling storytelling, promises and statements. This pattern results from our participants' experiences and perspectives and the analysis of Pride campaigns in 2021 and 2022 launched by our 20 brands' scope. So, it is contextual-based. Future research may explore more about this pattern to examine if it still occurs in other contexts and research scopes. It would be interesting looking also to other polarising social issues.

Furthermore, the leap from absent public positions to joining the LGBT conversation and from allyship to activism is a colossal jump with one undeniable core: high internal message-practice alignment (Vredenburg et al. 2020). In the light of distinguishing the strategic exercise of establishing the image of a brand ally or activist in the consumer's mind from the negotiation process between the private sector and LGBT regulators to access the ally and activist statuses, future research must explore their different goals and paths. Researchers must dive into the processes and marketing strategies to develop a consistent market positioning that may facilitate the brand's access to a targeted status.

Finally, brand activism became a thing, but it is still in its infancy, with Porter and Kramer (2011) calling businesses to help solve societal problems, supported by the belief that the private sector has the power to act as problem solvers, or the UN Commissioner for Human Rights (2017), Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, calling companies all over the world to become active agents of change.

We expect many new avenues and opportunities will arise for future research.

CHAPTER 8

8. Ethical Issues

We follow the Green et al. (1995) guidelines on the ethics for participatory action research in health promotion, adapted to our topic of research, namely:

- Participants and the nature of their involvement;
- The origin of the research question;
- The purpose of the research;
- Process and context-methodological implications;
- Opportunities to address the issue of interest;
- The nature of the research outcomes.

These guidelines influence informed consent, access, and participant protection.

Informed Consent

Considering our PAR framework, all the interviewees were informed about the purpose of the research and its procedures.

As we did in-depth interviews, participants actively contributed to the direction of our work in what we describe as a negotiation process. We had to exchange as much information as possible (Khanlou & Peter, 2005).

For the brands' selections and participation, it wasn't necessary to get consent from them, as this is non-financed research from any of the selected brands.

Access

Concerning the twenty brands under analysis, all the accessed information is freely available online through branded content, from Instagram publications to website information.

Participant's protection

Regarding participant collaboration, participants were not paid or got other benefits.

In qualitative research, it's difficult to guarantee that anonymised data become unlinkable or anonymous to the researchers, although it is possible to preserve participant anonymity for readers. However, confidentiality and anonymity in the investigation were guaranteed when requested by the participant (through coding).

We followed the guidelines from the Research Ethics Boards as we adhered to the principles of autonomy, confidentiality, respect, beneficence, and no maleficence (Mauthner & Birch, 2002). These guidelines allowed to protect participants and researchers, ensure research integrity, assure trust, and cope with challenging problems regarding conduct (Denzin & Giardina, 2007).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Interviews Overview

Date	Interviewee	Length	Documents	Reference to brands
2022				
July	Activist 1	30 minutes	No	No
July	Activist 2	62 minutes	No	No
July	Activist 3	36 minutes	No	No
July	Association 1	32 minutes	No	No
July	Outside marketer 1	48 minutes	No	No
July	Outside marketer 2	34 minutes	No	No
July	Outside marketer 3	24 minutes	No	No
July	Outside marketer 4	52 minutes	No	No
July	Association 2	24 minutes	Yes	No
July	Outside marketer 5	32 minutes	No	No
July	Association 3	37 minutes	Yes	No
July	Activist 4	34 minutes	Yes	No
July	Outside marketer 6	26 minutes	No	No
July	Association 4	35 minutes	No	Yes
August	Outside marketer 7	31 minutes	No	No
August	Activist 5	30 minutes	No	No
August	Inside marketer 1	25 minutes	No	Yes
August	Activist 6 *Protected identity	29 minutes	No	No
August	Other 1	36 minutes	No	No
August	Activist 7	24 minutes	No	No
August	Other 2	37 minutes	No	No
August	Outside marketer 8	40 minutes	No	Yes
August	Outside marketer 9	35 minutes	No	No
August	Inside marketer 2	47 minutes	Yes	Yes
August	Outside marketer 10	36 minutes	No	No
August	Activist 8	26 minutes	No	No
August	Association 5	47 minutes	No	Yes
August	Inside marketer 3	34 minutes	Yes	Yes
August	Association 6	34 minutes	No	No
August	Activist 9	36 minutes	No	No
August	Activist 10	30 minutes	No	No
August	Outside marketer 11	38 minutes	No	No
September	Other 3 *Protected identity	35 minutes	No	No
September	Association 7	29 minutes	No	No
September	Activist 11	31 minutes	No	No
September	Inside marketer 4	32 minutes	Yes	Yes
September	Activist 12	56 minutes	No	Yes
September	Association 8	50 minutes	No	No
September	Association 9	42 minutes	No	Yes

September	Other 4	46 minutes	No	Yes
September	Other 5 *Protected identity	32 minutes	No	No
September	Activist 13	54 minutes	No	No
September	Activist 14	37 minutes	No	Yes
September	Activist 15 *Protected identity	32 minutes	No	No
September	Association 10	74 minutes	No	Yes
September	Association 11	33 minutes	No	No
September	Other 6	40 minutes	No	No
October	Association 12 *Protected identity	60 minutes	No	Yes
October	Outside marketer 12	34 minutes	No	No
October	Association 13	28 minutes	No	Yes
October	Other 7	29 minutes	No	No
October	Association 14	32 minutes	Yes	No
November	Activist 16	20 minutes	No	No
November	Association 15	44 minutes	Yes	No
November	Other 8	35 minutes	No	No
November	Association 16 *Protected identity	36 minutes	No	No
2023				
March	Other 9	23 minutes	No	No
March	Inside DEI manager 5	30 minutes	Yes	Yes

Note: all interviews are semi-structured.

Appendix 2 – Semi-Structured Interviews Guide

Interviewee type: Activist

June to November 2022 – semi-structured interview

MAIN GOALS:
- Understand if brands can be allies and activists for LGBT rights and acceptance.
- Explore the meaning of being an activist for the LGBT movement.
- Understand the meaning of Pride.

NOTES:
- The Script was adapted during the interview to follow the interviewee's view.
- The original version contains specific questions based on the interviewee's background.

1. Can you please introduce yourself?
2. What does it mean to be an activist?
    a. What are the challenges for the LGBT community nowadays?
3. Being an activist is different from being an advocate?
4. Do you believe in corporations and brands getting involved in LGBT issues?
    a. Why are brands getting involved?
    b. When they get involved, what are they saying?
5. Do you work with corporations or brands? If so, how?
6. Can brands be activists, or is a romantic vision of the power and impact of brands?
7. Allyship, advocacy or activism. Are these 3 types of engagement accessible to brands?
    a. Can brands be a powerful voice for the LGBT community?
8. What does Pride mean to you?
    a. What do you expect from brands that celebrate Pride?
9. To whom are brands talking when they celebrate Pride?
    a. Rainbow logos, Pride collections, and partnering up with activists is enough?
10. Brands have the legitimacy to celebrate Queer people? How and why?
    a. If they celebrate only in June (Pride month), is that wrong?

*Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?

Interviewee type: Association member

July to November 2022 – semi-structured interview

MAIN GOALS:
- Understand if brands can be allies and activists for LGBT rights and acceptance, and how to do it.
- Explore the work of an LGBT association and how it collabs with the private sector.
- Understand the meaning of Pride.

NOTES:
- The Script was adapted during the interview to follow the interviewee's view.
- The original version contains specific questions based on the interviewee's background.

1. Can you please introduce yourself?
2. Is it different from being an ally, advocate and activist? How?
3. What are the main challenges for the LGBT community?
4. What are your expectations when you see brands getting involved?
5. How can the private sector partner up with you?
    a. What are your requirements to accept a brand as partner?
    b. Does the interest increase at specific times of the year, or it's relatively stable?
    c. Is Partnering up with associations a crucial step to supporting the LGBT+ community genuinely?
6. Why are brands willing to take sides on LGBT issues?
7. Can brands be activists?
8. What are the questions of how to initiate and implement successful LGBT corporate advocacy?
11. Getting involved only during Pride month is pinkwashing?
12. To whom are brands talking?
13. Can brands make a real difference in LGBT community lives?
14. What does Pride mean?

*Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?

Interviewee type: Inside marketer

August to September 2022 – semi-structured interview

MAIN GOALS:
- Understand the internal process of brands to make public stands about the LGBT cause from the marketing point of view.
- Explore the process of conquering the ally status or evolving into an activist brand within the LGBT context.
- Understand the meaning of Pride in the Private sector.

NOTES:
- The Script was adapted during the interview to follow the interviewee's view.
- The original version contains specific questions based on the interviewee's background.

1. Can you please introduce yourself and your work at the brand XXX?
2. Is your brand an ally or an activist for LGBT rights?
3. How do you choose the causes you stand for? Is it worldwide or per country/ market?
   a. Supporting the community in the UK is different from supporting it in Saudi Arabia. How do you manage?
4. Are you able to measure the impact of your activism?
5. Brands have the potential to play a critical role in the LGBT conversation?
6. Why and how is XXX getting involved?
7. When was year 0 for XXX to get involved in the LGBT conversation?
8. Work in Pride is the motto. How do you celebrate Pride?
   a. What's your message?
   b. Does the brand develop actions throughout the year or only during June?
   c. How do you select the association to work with?
   d. Why is XXX celebrating?
9. To whom are you talking when you celebrate Pride?
   a. What does Pride mean to you?
10. Did you ever face a backlash for a Pride campaign?
11. What is the voice of XXX in the LGBT conversation?

*Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?

Interviewee type: Inside DEI manager

March 2023 – semi-structured interview

MAIN GOALS:

- Understand the internal process of brands to make public stands about the LGBT cause from the human resources point of view.

- Explore the process of conquering the ally status or evolving into an activist brand within the LGBT context.

- Understand the meaning of Pride in the Private sector.

NOTES:

- The Script was adapted during the interview to follow the interviewee's view.

- The original version contains specific questions based on the interviewee's background.

1. Can you please introduce yourself?
2. How is a daily day for the Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer at XXX?
3. Why does XXX have a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion strategy?
4. How do you evaluate the success of your Diversity, Equity & Inclusion strategy?
5. XXX is one of the brands given an example of brand activism, allyship and advocacy regarding the LGBT+ movement. How and why did the company decide to join the conversation and be vocal about it?
6. Can you say that XXX is an activist brand regarding LGBT rights?
7. In your opinion, why are LGBT issues becoming so popular among companies?
8. Why is Pride so popular among corporations?
    a. What does Pride mean to you?
9. What are the steps to create communications and change management strategies?
10. Is it possible to be authentic and have a marketing and communication plan for what your corporation does regards diversity, equity and inclusion without being perceived as exploitation (and doing pinkwashing)?
11. Brands can become activists, or is it a romantic vision?
    a. Is it different being an ally and being an activist?
12. Corporations and brands can make a real difference in LGBT community lives?

*Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?

Interviewee type: Outside marketer

July to October 2022 – semi-structured interview

MAIN GOALS:
- Understand if brands can be allies and activists for LGBT rights and acceptance and how to do it from the marketing point of view.
- Explore the process of conquering the ally status or evolving into an activist brand within the LGBT context throughout marketing.

NOTES:
- The Script was adapted during the interview to follow the interviewee's view.
- The original version contains specific questions based on the interviewee's background.

1. Can you please introduce yourself?
2. What are relevant brands for society, and how can we create them?
3. Brands have the potential to play a critical role in the LGBT conversation?
    a. Why are brands getting involved?
4. How can we balance the financial gains with the social purpose impact?
5. Can brands be allies, advocates and activists?
6. Brands can become activists, or is it a romantic vision?
    a. Is it different being an ally and being an activist?
7. Is it possible to be authentic and have a marketing and communication plan for what your corporation does regards diversity, equity and inclusion without being perceived as exploitation (and doing pinkwashing)?
8. How should brands develop and implement an LGBT marketing strategy?
    a. How do you measure the results?
9. How can a brand evaluate if it has what it takes to become an LGBT activist or to be relevant to society?
10. To whom are brands talking when they celebrate Pride?
    a. What does Pride mean to you?
11. Can brands make a real difference in LGBT community lives?

*Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?

Interviewee type: Others – consultant and DEI manager

August 2022 to March 2023 – semi-structured interview

MAIN GOALS:
- Understand how consultants work with brands aiming to take public stands on LGBT issues.

NOTES:
- The Script was adapted during the interview to follow the interviewee's view.
- The original version contains specific questions based on the interviewee's background.

1. Can you please introduce yourself?
2. What does it mean to work for the LGBT rights and acceptance?
    a. What are the steps to diagnose a corporation regarding its inclusion and diversity policies, especially its LGBT concerns?
3. How do brands contribute to making the LGBT community accepted?
4. Why are LGBT issues becoming so popular among companies?
5. Do companies need to come out?
6. What are the steps to becoming an inclusive company?
7. Is Leadership important to help brands get involved with the LGBT conversation?
8. Brands can become activists, or is it a romantic vision?
    a. How can companies win the status of allies?
    b. Is it different being an ally and being an activist?
9. Why is Pride so popular among corporations?
    a. Is celebrating once-a-year pinkwashing?
    b. What does Pride mean to you?
10. Do LGBT issues have the potential to improve the brand's emotional reputation?
11. How do you define LGBT advocacy? Is it different from activism?
12. Can brands make a real difference in LGBT community lives?

*Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?

Interviewee type: Others - researcher

August 2022 to March 2023 – semi-structured interview

MAIN GOALS:
- Understand how consultants work with brands to take public stands on LGBT issues.

NOTES:
- The Script was adapted during the interview to follow the interviewee's view.

- The original version contains specific questions based on the interviewee's background.

1. Can you please introduce yourself?
2. Do you believe in brands getting involved in LGBT issues?
    a. Why are brands getting involved?
    b. When they get involved, what are they saying?
    c. Are brands and LGBT+ issues a demanding and sensitive combination?
3. What can civil society activists do to protect their movements from openly exploitative co-optation of their causes by PR and marketing strategists?
4. Is it possible to be authentic and have a marketing and communication plan for what your corporation does regards diversity, equity and inclusion without being perceived as exploitation (and doing pinkwashing)?
5. What is the power of the LGBT issues for the reputation of corporations?
6. Brands can become activists, or is it a romantic vision?
    a. Is it different being an ally and being an activist?
7. How should they communicate their diversity and inclusion policies?
8. What does Pride represent?
9. Pride events, including parades, increasingly attract corporate sponsorship. What does this mean?
    a. What does Pride mean to you?
10. Pride can be understood as a commercial move, mainly the June Pride month. To whom are brands talking when they celebrate Pride?
11. Do you think brands can make a real difference in LGBT community lives? How?
12. LGBT+ brand activism is good for what and for whom?

*Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?

Appendix 3 – Documentary Data: Documents Given by Interviewees

The 'Diligence Processes and Toolkits for authentic partnerships with the Private Sector' documents

Given by	Owner	Year	Online	Relevance
Association 3	ILGA-Europe	2020	No	This 'confidential' document is relevant to create the brand activism framework, from allyship status to activism mode from the marketing perspective. Guiding principles, assessment criteria, and decision-making process to engage with the private sector and to build authentic and sustainable engagement, partnerships or funding relationships.
Association 3	ILGA-Europe	2023	Yes	The 'Partnerships for LGBTI equality' document explain how the private sector can collaborate with ILGA-Europe, from sponsorship and joint campaigns to fundraising led by LGBT+ staff networks, and to make a real impact on LGBTI equality. Give examples and real case studies to inspire to activate new allies to help change forward for LGBTI people. Tell the benefits of genuine engagement, from competitive edge to reaching new audiences and increasing loyalty.
Association 2	Workplace Pride	2011	Yes	The 'Declaration of Amsterdam for an LGBT Inclusive Workplace' document provided 10 initial call-to-actions regarding employers, including: 1. Provide a safe workplace and promote authenticity for LGBT employees. 2. Work with other parties dealing with LGBT workplace issues. 3. Support leaders and decision-makers that strive to create LGBT-inclusive working environments. 9. Dedicate at least 1€ per employee into support LGBT programs and Employee Resource Groups. 10. Support the improvement of working environments for LGBT employees in all the countries where they are active.
Association 2	Workplace Pride	2021	Yes	'Workplace Pride UN LGBTI Standards Toolkit' allowed to better comprehend the specificities of three elements: (1) components of engagement with the private sector; (2) formal partnerships overview; (3) due diligence framework. Provided knowledge about the UN LGBT standards to support businesses in tackling discrimination

				against LGBTI people and how to have real impact and contribute to positive change through transforming advocacy into action.
Association 2	Workplace Pride and Deloitte	2022	Yes	Gathers data to make informed decisions about LGBT+ workplace inclusion. The 'LGBT+ Workplace Monitor 2022 How proud can we be?' document results from a collaboration between Workplace Pride and their member Deloitte.
Association 4	Copenhagen Pride	2020	Yes	The 'Sponsorship & Partnerships Ethics Policy' enhances brands' commitment with the LGBT+ community. Copenhagen Pride corporate partners and sponsors follow their ethical standards and publicly demonstrate their commitment to LGBTI+ equality.
Association 15	REDI	2020	No	The 'Red Empresarial por la Diversidad e Integración' document uses corporate language to explain the benefits of working with REDI, such as company visibility and inclusive culture.

Other documents

Given by	Owner	Year	Online	Relevance
Activist 4	André Macedo	2022	Yes	The 'LGBT+ Inclusion at Work 2022: A Global Outlook' provides insights about the impact focusing on LGBT+ inclusion have and the steps to create and maintain a LGBT+ inclusive culture. Key report insights, such as: (1) Allyship, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and the employer's visible external support are critical to aid LGBT+ inclusion; and (2) allyship is vital for enabling LGBT+ employees to feel comfortable in their workplaces. Gives three recommendations about LGBT+ inclusion at work: (1) enable employees to be out at work with clear messaging, leaders walking the talk, and visible actions of support for LGBT+ inclusion, internally and externally; (2) do not tolerate non-inclusive behaviour with clear messaging, commitment and action from leaders about what behaviours are expected; (3) and embrace the power of vocal allyship from non-LGBT+ colleagues to enable LGBT+ inclusion at work.
Inside marketer 2	Ikea Portugal	2021	No	The 'O Progresso faz-se' explains that Ikea co-created the UN LGBTI Standards.

4.1. Interviews questions ranges, cluster and instances of evidences

Question ranges	Question Cluster	Main target	Instances of evidence from interviews
1) How can companies partner up with you? 2) How does it work the partnership program? 3) How do you evaluate if a company has what it takes to become partner? 4) Do you receive a lot of enquiries?	How can the private sector partner up with LGBT associations and activists?	Associations	"The most common way is related with partnerships during Pride season: Companies can have limited-edition products or public advertising campaigns that involve a donation to ILGA Europe and a mention. Another way is a more internal option. Thirdly, we are trying to have more companies interested in getting involved in the advocacy process to support the community and talking to governments, putting pressure where and when needed. Usually, companies reach out with a proposal or an enquiry. Then we assess if the company would be a good partner for us, as we have a checklist to understand if the company has what it takes to be our partner, from headquarters to internal policies and supply chain, among others." - association 3 "As empresas chegam até à Pride at Work Canada de algumas formas. Às vezes, com alguma consciência até de alguma ação de marketing, em que querem fazer algo para o Pride Month. Depois o mês passa e não acontece nada, sendo que algumas marcas recebem críticas de que deveriam fazer mais e vêm até nós. Fazemos uma auditoria de 35 perguntas sobre inclusão social para entender onde é que as empresas estão, quais são as necessidades e para onde querem ir." (Portuguese version) = "Companies come to Pride at Work Canada in different ways. Sometimes, companies have an idea of a marketing initiative where they want to do something for Pride Month. Then, the month goes by, and nothing happens, and some brands receive criticism that they

			should be doing more and come to us. We do a 35-question audit on social inclusion to understand where companies are, their needs, and where they want to go." (English version) - association 12 "We tend to have more enquiries than we can handle, which is good, but they mostly come around the Pride season, which is not so good. Being a member does not mean that a company is doing anything or performing better than other companies. It means they have a commitment and want to learn. When a company signs up as a partner but does not do anything meaningful, we decide to remove it as a partner. The membership program is our primary source of revenue, but we answer to trans and queer communities in Canada. They are who our mission serves, so we must be conscious that some companies might sign up to say they are partners but not do anything after that." – association 14/12
1) What are the requirements to accept a brand? 2) How do you evaluate companies? 3) How do you evaluate if a company is ready? 4) How do you audit the company? 5) How do understand the status of a company to work with it?	What are your requirements to accept a brand as a partner or to collaborate with a brand?	Associations	"We don't have specific requirements, as our decisions depend on the brand." - association 2 "Sou muito analítica e ética. Enquanto ativista, o que tenho feito e promovido dá muita credibilidade à marca. Inclusive Burberry fez um trabalho com a Casa, com uma pequena doação, em que disse que para a Casa é uma e para a ativista é outra, sendo que a ativista é muito mais cara. As ativistas são o verniz que as marcas precisam. Conseguir dialogar com uma ativista aguerrida é um verniz que a marca quer e aí vou ser bem exigente: quero saber quem são as pessoas envolvidas, como e que imagens vão ser divulgadas, qual é a proposta, e só depois podemos sentar." (Portuguese version) = "I'm very analytical and ethical. As an activist, what I've done and promoted gives the brand a lot of credibility. Burberry even did a piece of work with Casa, with a small

			donation, in which it said that for Casa it's one. For the activist, it's another, and the activist is much more expensive. Activists are the varnish that brands need. Being able to engage in dialogue with a strong activist is a varnish that the brand wants, and I'm going to be very demanding: I want to know who the people involved are, how and what images are going to be released, what the proposal is, and only then can we sit down." (English version) - Activist 12 "It depends on what companies are looking for. First, I look at the language companies use to speak about the community. Then I want to know if they are looking for support for gender or sexual orientation or the general population of LGBTQ+ people. I need to know where they are starting from. If they want to do something externally, I try to understand what they are doing internally because this is important." - Other 7
1) What does it mean to be your partner? 2) Partnering up with you gives authenticity? 3) When a brand is certified, is it also activist? 4) How does it look like a good partnership? 5) What does it mean to be a partner? 6) Partnering up with associations is vital to genuinely support the LGBT+ community?	Is Partnering up with associations a crucial step to supporting the LGBT community genuinely?	Associations	"If you want to promote and work with charities and LGBT+ organizations, you can impact these organizations by raising awareness. You can also potentially impact by funding as there are organizations that need the help and the support. The organizations can also help brands, as they may prevent them from falling into several traps and getting negative backlash from the community when working with LGBT+ issues. Companies have to do the work with their staff while you do the work externally. This genuine engagement gets reflected in business ethos. So, if your company ethos is about families, why don't to make sure the representation is not just about a nuclear family of a man, a woman and a child, or two children, but all sorts of families you might have? If your brand is saying one thing and your ethos is saying another message, it's never telling the same." - Association 1

			"It says that this organization is commitment with LGBT+ inclusion and it's supporting the community outside the workplace." - Association 2
			"The answer is yes and no. Some brands are more passive, and some brands are more active, but we must be careful with language. What do you mean by activism? If you mean that they are out there, demonstrating that they are really caring, the answer is yes for many of them. For other organizations, they want to be certified because they want their staff and futures staff to know that they will be working in an environment where they would be respected and valued. Activism is as spectrum, some people want to be loud out there, shouting from the roof top, and other people want to be more structure and measured. All of them are activism and is for the audience to decide which one they prefer. Effective activism is about bringing people along as friends for the long-term, not alienating them by shouting to people and telling what they are doing wrong. You achieve more with a spoon full of sugar, instead of a spoon full of vinegar." - Association 8
			"We are a non-profit organization working as an enormous community focused on three aspects. They are activation, connection and empowerment. 1. Activation is to talk about LGBT+ diversity in the corporative world. We help the company to understand how to manage this type of diversity. 2. Connect them. Companies want to do things, but sometimes they don't know how to do them. We connect companies with other companies already working on this LGBT+ diversity so that they can learn with others. 3. The empowerment of these companies. We give them tools and knowledge about LGBT+ diversity on specific

			topics, from how to implement LGBT+ resource groups to how to welcome trans people." - Association 15
1) How can brands evaluate when is the right time to be vocal? 2) If a brand asks if the LGBT issues are a right fit for the brand, how would you reply?	Brands have the legitimacy to celebrate Queer people? How and why?		"It would depend on the brand, for instance, if the company founder is pro-queer. As a tech company owner, if you are dissatisfied with the number of unemployed LGBT+ people because they don't have the qualifications, you can partner with education-focused entities to provide solutions and mitigate the problem. You eventually solve a challenge for the community that you want to solve. So, how do you want to be seen doing the work? Because if you want to put a rainbow on everything, that's not it." - Activist 2 "The right time to say something is when your voice has some impact. Marketing must represent something real. I want the kind of influence that companies have." - association 9 "The purpose is not a tool to apply everywhere. Brands need to do it in a very conscious and authentic way, where the purpose belongs to the DNA of the brands and the values they stand for. So, purpose is a tool that can unlock additional growth, but it doesn't mean purpose can relate to everything. First, you need to answer: What is the brand purpose? And only then you can see how to apply it." - outside marketer
1) Why are brands willing to get involved? 2) Why are brands supporting the LGBT cause? 3) Why are brands hunting social causes? 4) Do you believe in corporations getting involved in the activism movement?	Why are brands getting involved?	All groups	"For brands, it is business. There is an entire community they can work with. But it is also what the brand value as a company. If their company values are more about wanting to get the most out of their people, you will more genuinely care about their people's wellbeing, and it will be a more inclusive space for LGBT+ communities by its nature. Finally, brands see it as if they can make a difference in the world, depending on their CEO and senior structure. Or customers can demand that change." -

			Association 1
			"It is not mandatory but it helps, we are evolving to a place where we expect companies at least address a little bit of this, they have positive policies in the workplace. So, who they are, what they believe, and why they do exist. I think it's much harder to break out as a great company if you don't come from a place where you have a strong core of values. We need to see ourselves in advertising and marketing." - Outside marketer 5
			"I remember when brands started having an interest in joining the LGBT conversation. I was there. We begun to see that interest in the early 90s, when companies like American Airlines and Absolute Vodka started supporting the LGBT community. In the late '90s and early '20s American Airlines was a big sponsor of GLAAD, and what they did is to give us vouchers to travel. I would not be able to do all the work I did if we did not have access to travel. Corporate America started to see LGBT people more as a market than as a community. Through the lens of media and representation, they were presented not an accurate representation of our community but a representation of part of us: the white gay men with income. That is why we have started to be perceived as a distinct market. I am not saying that in a bad way. However, the fallacy here is that it over-compensated it in terms of expectations. And you are also dealing with a community that welcomed that support with open arms because we have not been supported or recognised. At the same time, individuals were saying that this could be a huge piece of how we create change in the culture and get recognition as people and consumers in the capitalist society. We supported and educated the corporate supporters by saying that what you are doing is good and

that you are doing the right thing, but you can't just put a rainbow flag on something or throw stuff at us because it impacts your bottom line. We are not stupid. We know things need to be good for your bottom line. You are businesses. But we must understand that we are not all a group of rich gay white men with no kids that take four cruises a year. The key is that we are loyal consumers if you support our community and our organizations." - outside marketer 6

"We know why they do it. There are three justifications all businesses relate: engage their staff, reputation, and there are good people working that want to take a stand. However, it is better not to do anything than to do something that looks pinkwashing." - Association 5

"As marcas perceberam que isto é um meio de uso mas também de abuso, que lhes permite comunicar algo durante um mês. Mas durante os restantes 11 meses não és o mesmo, não defendes os mesmos valores? Por isso é que defendemos a universidade, sobretudo sendo uma marca que trabalha na área sexual." - inside marketer 4

"Companies are taking stands on LGBT+ issues because capitalism is changing. The private sector is under pressure to show that they are contributing to a better world. The private sector has inherently caused damage to the world, so there is a good reason why the population is so suspicious of the private sector. First, companies cannot live in a world where such a significant part of the population lacks dignity and economic opportunities and sometimes is unfairly criminalized and not considered it. Secondly, the guidelines for business are clear: the guidelines from United Nations about businesses' responsibilities for human rights. When I was at the

United Nations, I translated those responsibilities into a document which is the STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR BUSINESS regarding LGBTQ+ rights, which are now part of the Human Rights framework. The last reason is the economic argument that taking a stand on LGBT rights is good business. When companies are good on LGBT rights, the public is interested in it, creating the risk of pinkwashing as it is easy to be LGBT-friendly." - other 4

"What companies are trying to show with their LGBTQ+ support is that they are progressive caring organizations, so people buy from them instead of other companies. But usually, when companies get involved, they are not really saying enough. Defend us, be the allies we need. They might be just producing rainbow goods and collecting money during Pride month. Displaying rainbow colors is not enough. We see it as rainbow capitalism, a turn-off. Many companies with a rainbow campaign secretly or not so secretly donate to anti-LGBTQ+ causes and groups." - activist 12

"I would say a lot of them see it as an opportunity to get the gay dollar. I think there are companies that want to be genuinely supportive, but them they would approach differently. A good example is TARGET, which is starting to be so much better about partnering LGBT+ own businesses to get their lines available in the stores, instead of doing their own things and slapping rainbows all over it. When you only slapping a rainbow in shirt, where's the intention in there?" - activist 15

"We need to make sure that the commitment comes from the top management. Otherwise, the corporation is not really committed, and this is worse than not doing

			anything, as you will have something understood as bad by a segment of the market. You will not be able to clarify that and connect it to your values and to human rights." association 15

"Some of the large corporations see as a way of giving back, other to attract talent. But giving money is not enough. It is important to understand if the values of the company are aligned with us, if they are doing the work internally in addition to throwing money at queer organizations, and we have these conversations with potential partners. What are your motivations and intentions for your support? What are you expecting?" - association 16 |
| 1) What are the main challenges for the LGBT community that are opportunities for brands?
2) What is the state of Pride in Europe?
3) What are the main challenges for the community in Canada?
4) What are the main challenges of the LGBT community nowadays?
5) What are the challenges for the LGBT+ community in Ghana?
6) What are the major challenges for the LGBT+ community in Indonesia? | What are the challenges for the LGBT community nowadays? | All groups | "The primary challenges the amount of traction we gather that is used against us. We have visibility, there has been more knowledge production, and while we have been using this knowledge production to build our community, there has been taken and misinterpreted by many others as an effort to say that we are introducing something into the knowledge space that shouldn't be in the knowledge space" Beyond misinformation is disinformation targeted to communities that otherwise would be open to participate in the learning process. However, they have been told and keep getting told that as more information there is about us, it means that we are creating something that never existed. I'm conscious that change doesn't happen because I'm saying it's happening. The real-world progress in the introduction of more inclusive paternity leave is the introduction of recognizing surrogacy in human resources policies. These are the real-world progressions that we are advocating for, and they will happen through advocacy for LGBT+ people." - activist 2

"Education is a little battleground because we are trying |

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>to ensure everyone has an inclusive education and school. We do have a more inclusive curriculum, Scotland more than the rest of the UK, but we now have that LGBT lives have to be mentioned in education, when before it was forbidden. In the US, we are seeing a backlash, and the research shows the relevance for children to see people like themselves for their mental health. There are still laws to be fought." - association 1

"It's a very healthy movement because around 60% of Pride across the world are in Europe, which highlights the health of the movement in Europe. It also highlights the unhealth of the movement in other parts of the world. The number of Prides in Europe is increasing. The more Pride we have, the more inclusion we have." - association 4

"There's the idea that the woke queerness is very westernized, and people think it is the Western culture that is making people identify as queer. For me, the corporate engagement is good for the activism, but how are they getting involved? I would say the best way is through financing and providing technical support." - activist 6</td></tr>
<tr><td>1) Brands can be activists?
2) What is the role of brands in LGBT activism?
3) Can a brand be an ally and activist?
4) Is it different being ally and being activist?
5) Are brands activists or tools?
6) Is it different doing activism as a person and as a brand?
7) What do you understand as LGBT+ activism and is it different from advocacy?
8) Brands can be allies without being activists?</td><td>Brands can be activists, or is it a romantic vision?

Allyship, advocacy or activism. Are these 3 types of engagement accessible to brands?</td><td>All groups</td><td>"Todas as marcas têm o potencial de se envolverem e de se tornarem ativistas." (Portuguese version) = All brands have the potential to get involved and become activists (English version) - activist 1

"There are three levels of this. In the first level is someone who is queer and an activist. My definition of activism is born out of dissatisfaction with the status quo. As a result, you are working towards righting something you consider wrong. When fixed, you can suspend your battle or move your efforts to another issue. And this is what it means the three levels: The Queer person that</td></tr>
</table>

9) Is it different being an ally, an advocate, and an activist?			happens to be an advocate or activist for their own life; people who are Queer and that are doing activism by visibility and the politics of the present (for example, famous people who are Queer and when they say something we see it as activism – which is or is not); and when we talk about brand identity and fidelity when a brand like NIKE establishes a campaign where they encourage 'Just Do It', they are saying we believe in you. NIKE never tried to ride the rainbow train. But can we say that Nike is not pro-queer? No. Nike is very pro-queer but do not try to merchandise it. A brand like Nike, not having a rainbow anywhere, for somebody else, can say that Nike never showed their support to the Queer community, when in fact, on the ground, they have. Activism by proximity is not activism by practice." - activist 2

"Brand activism could be companie's lobbies for changes in parliament, for example, but activism it can also be showing up in cultures that are not very inclusive, might be showing an LGBT+ couple in an advert for 30 seconds. This representation could be as much activism as lobbying in the parliament. Activism is taking allyship a step further, but again is how you define activism." - association 1

"They are not activists and do not need to take this role. The time of thinking that companies only role is to make a profit for their shareholders is over. They want to be corporate citizens with core values, which may include inclusive LGBT societies, through several ways, such as inclusive workplaces, donations to LGBT associations, having LGBT representation in advertising where they operate, and supporting advocacy efforts, among others. These actions are aligned with their values but are not |

			part of being an activist. They can give the tools to the community to speak." - association 3
			"As marcas podem ser ativistas, sendo que ainda estamos a tentar descobrir como. Em primeiro lugar, o ativismo das marcas começa internamente." - activist 5
			"Brand activism is doing something that probably is not even good for them in the short-term, but that is good because is related to their values. Not every cause is activism. When you try though lobby to change a law or to defend your interests, when corporations do that related to laws, that is activism, because you are trying to make changes in the legislative field. If a brand celebrates Pride, that is not activism. But if you are celebrating in Saudi Arabia, it could be activism, as it can be dangerous to the brand and helpful for the people to whom you are doing that. Usually, brands are not the first ones creating a conversation, but they have power pushing them. Generally, brands come after society." - outside marketer 7
			"Uma marca ativista é uma marca que é ativa, vocal, presente, que é consistente para ajudar um fim para o qual quero mobilizar pessoas. Ser ativista não tem de ser necessariamente relacionado com uma comunidade." - inside marketer 1
			"Brands can be activists and allies of change."- activist 6
			"I think they are neither. I would use the word advocates. It is a scale. Corporations tend to run away from the word activists because it makes them feel it is political. Getting into was considering a political space, by which I mean being an activist. Organizations usually see that as a

dangerous territory because it can be easily misinterpreted or twisted by somebody who wants to take the message into other direction. Allies are hugely important, but many people see it as a passive term as it means I believe in your cause, and I support your cause, but do not expect me to do anything about it. It is a horrible generalization because many allies are prepared to step up. However, at that point they will become advocates, and it is really championing your cause, especially if it is not their cause, are only supporting you. So, organizations hate to be called activists and can't become allies because if they are allies, they are probably too passive. So an organization doing what it should be doing is, for me, an advocate and is powerful. They are the wheels of influence. As an advocate, you are something that we should be championing. Make sure your cause is real, and we will support you." – other 2

"I think brands ultimately are not activists. Brands are strategically aligned with activism to sell their products. At the end of the day, if any brand claims to be an LGBT+ advocate or activist, if supporting LGBT+ people led to their profit margins slipping, they would not do it. And any activism based on making more money is not activism. You are creating positive change for yourself before you create positive change for anyone else. – activist 10"

"The step of moving from allyship to activism is big. Activism includes active and revolutionary thinking. Being an ally gives visibility, and visibility is the first step on the road to respect. I have developed a formula in my research: visibility, representation, tolerance, acceptance, and respect. There is allyship and activism, but a brand does not have to be an activist to bring the message across

| | | | as long they are allies is already enough. The A for an ally is very relevant: if visible people say it is important to support gays as impact, for example." - outside marketer 11

"Brands are allies. Activist is a strong word. Being an activist is taking risks. I considered an LGBT+ leader to be slightly crazy. Usually, LGBT+ activists lose a lot, and I have never met a brand that had a tremendous sacrifice for the LGBT cause. They take very calculated risks that have paid off. Activism is courage. Brands do not have the courage to the extent of losing something." - other 4

"Yes, I believe in that, and I have seen it. We need to support the idea of brand activism if we continue living in capitalism. Thinking brand activism is a joke is part of the problem as we are not allowing them to do better." - other 7

"Allyship says that when something happens, we stand by you. While activism says: When something happens, we are on the frontline with you, not standing by, but if you need the money, we will give you the money. If you need printing services, we will give you the printing services. We are willing to put our resources into advocacy efforts." - activist 2

"You can put the engagement of brands with Pride into a sort of spectrum of cynicism somewhere between we are getting involved in Pride superficially and see it as a marketing opportunity as we do not care about LGBT people, we are just doing this for cash. And on the other hand, you have the corporate activists, where are businesses involved in Pride for tangible, authentic, genuine reasons supporting the LGBI community and |

employees globally and not just in countries where it is easy standing up for LGBTI rights. If you could plot every Pride sponsor on that spectrum ten years ago, you would have a lot more over here, and we are shifting. Many corporations moved for authentic and genuine support. Copenhagen Pride publishes its ethical standard because it is how we tell people how we judge corporations." – association 4

"Advocacy is a part of activism, as brand activism being from messaging to practice and not just symbolic. Big businesses marching in Pride in London and using the rainbow flag is not as strong as it was. When they did 20 years ago, that was symbolic. It could have a significant impact in terms of people feeling they would be welcomed in those businesses, contributing to changing attitudes. So, the context is important. If a bank puts a rainbow flag in one of its windows in London, does that makes a big difference now? Probably not. If a bank does this in Kenya, it might have a bigger impact. So, I wonder if the definition depends on the context. Activism is broader than advocacy, as advocacy is messaging." – association 5

"Yes, one hundred percent yes. Pride events are so popular in the UK among employers, it is almost fashionable for a company to march as part of a Pride parade, to have rainbow colours merchandising in June. This is important because it shows that your firms cares, that it is a part of the identity of the firm, that we are not being forgotten, and allows people to be themselves in the workplace and celebrates them, their Pride and their joy. However, there is a very slippery turn to Pink Washing, when you only have companies being active during Pride month, normally June, July, or August, and then their

			LGBT+ network only exits on marketing brochures and fancy websites, but nothing really happens on the ground. No events are being hosted by the firm. There's no money being putted behind the marketing brochures, and that performative activism, where you try to catch the benefits of being LGBT+ inclusive, namely the economic benefits, it has become sexy to be LGBT-friendly, without changing the status quo, you are only challenging you balance sheet. You are misleading the consumers. Some people say brands and corporations should stay out of the LGBT conversation. I think brands and corporations shouldn't participate unless they actively believe in the cause or if they are only interested in making more money. They need to increase the LGBT inclusiveness in the firm, for example. Brands are important because they influence a lot of young people. If LEGO releases their first rainbow-colours LEGO set, it is important because it sends a direct message to young people, for example." – activist 14.
1) What does it mean to be an LGBT+ activist? 2) What does it mean to be an activist? 3) How do you define brand activism? 4) Business can provoke social change? 5) Is business able to provoke social change? 6) Brand have the power to change the world? 7) Being a LGBT+ activist requires courage? 8) Is it more accurate to say that a brand is an ally instead of an activist? 9) What does it mean to a trans activist and human rights activist?	Can brands make a real difference in LGBT community lives? What does it mean to be an activist?	All groups	"Businesses can provoke social change for a couple of reasons: 1) businesses respond to demand, so if there is support from their market or their market based, they can respond to that, provide according to that need, and make shifts. 2) they are at positioning through marketing to change people's opinions and help them along the journey to what they demand or need. That is the case of LGBT rights, at least in the context of the United States, where corporations were often at the forefront to helping move along that movement in ways that governments were not at the time. Large businesses support was able to help to move the needle in ways that other mechanisms were not." - outside marketer 1 "Being an LGBT+ activist requires courage. Being an

activist means that your social life needs to be in suspense. We are still in the battle. LGBT+ are human rights and how do you begin to have a common language? I believe most people are homophobic because they don't understand a lot of people, so information is also a way of fighting. We need to demystify a lot of things and this requires a lot of resources. Brands have a huge influence in the society, as they help people to understand how inclusiveness works." - activist 6

"No Brasil, a primeira resposta é entender se está pronta para morrer, a qualquer momento posso ser executada. É ter essa ousadia e sede de produzir vida." (Portuguese version) = "In Brazil, the first response is to understand if you're ready to die. You can be executed at any moment. It's about having that boldness and thirst to produce life." (English version) - activist 12

"The truth is that it seems possible, but it is still a romantic idea because I work for these organizations and I know how difficult it is to get organizations to take a stand in things like LGBT+ issues. Brand activism for them has been relegated to sustainable goals, so if it is not within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), not really. There is brand activism, for sure, the whole idea of the social governance sustainability commitments and human rights commitments that brands make are brand activism. But some brands are unable to take a step further and say that they want to get involved with governments, for example. But brands don't want to piss off governments, as many countries don't operate in a free market, so brands can't become politically involved because it's too dangerous, brands must understand what the risk in a specific place is. So, brands are always very careful, as businesses at the end of the day are still

			designed to make money. However, ethics and morality came to the picture about one decade or two decades ago and brands are starting to take that seriously." – other 5
			"Being an activist means being in danger. To literally or metaphorically stand up (sometimes in harm's way) for those who cannot do it on their own. It means to motivate groups of people and individuals alike and to inspire them to find and define the correct side of history. It's the bearing of the torch to make things less bad. It's the making of a more perfect union, and improving the world one heart at a time. I know what I do is quite dangerous and I wouldn't be the first activist to be killed for it, but I feel compelled. If not me, then who? Since late 2018, I've been pursuing multiple creative avenues in my new life as a living-out-loud trans woman." – activist 13
			"Inside the walls of your corporation, you have the choice to do whatever you want to. They have the moral obligation to do that. If you can don't, why wouldn't you do that? You have the option to do change." - other 6
			"Brands are a tool because they aren't even the corporation itself. Brands are what values people associate with a product or a company or something like that. Corporations get very strategic about how they position brands. I am working with a large multinational corporation that has many brands underneath it. And one of their brands is focused on LGBTQ issues, but other brands, also underneath these multinational corporations, want to be positioned as eco-friendly and sustainable, so we realize how brands are being positioned in a certain way, focusing on a particular cause, sometimes ignoring other causes." – association 9

			"As marcas têm muito impacto. As pessoas põem o ónus nas empresas e nos CEO de criar mudança. Reconhecem às empresas o poder de criar mudança. A publicidade normaliza muitas vezes comportamentos. As marcas, e a publicidade, têm poder de mudar perceção e de influência nos decisores, na sociedade como um todo. Temos vários instrumentos para ter um papel social, seja diretamente, seja através do que fazemos nas nossas lojas em que representamos e levantamos problemas, e a normalizar. Quanto maiores, mais poder de influência e de transformação têm." - inside marketer 2 "Brands are a big part of education and that's why we are calling on and researching behind the companies we support and buy. As consumers, we want to believe in a brand and spend our money responsibly. There is an opportunity to educate through brands." - other 7 "I don't think brands can do the difference through advertising. It harms to queer and trans people if you are constantly putting a rainbow everywhere. Every exposure we get comes with a kind of backlash, so when we get visual support with real support, is a lose-lose situation for us. So, solve a problem of the community, advocate for a right, and not stay silent when people try to criminalize who we are. If you are doing this and a marketing campaign, that fines and doesn't matter what some people think." - association 14 "Levi's has been an example able to positively impact the LGBT+ communities, giving the community a stronger voice and presence. You know, again through the holistic approach of supporting or posing legislation that is inclusive or exclusive, funding non-profit organizations that are dedicated to protecting and upholding the

			LGBTQ community, participating in the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index, having benefits that are inclusive for LGBTQ employees and their partners having benefits, and other perks that are going to be in support of the LGBTQ+ community and families. All of that is an important part of the commitment and makes it very real and tangible." - inside DEI manager 5
1) How do you work with global brands that are very vocal in the western world, but silent in the Middle East, for example? 2) When you have global brands, working on issues like sexual orientation and gender identity can be controversial. How should a brand manage its local presence? 3) What do you think about brands thar are very vocal in markets like the UK but silent in the Middle East?	Supporting the community in the UK is different from supporting it in Saudi Arabia. How do you manage?	All groups	"É uma boa diferenciação entre o que distingue um ativista de um não ativista. Um ativista é alguém que defende uma causa independentemente de um contexto adverso. Portanto, seria uma força para promover essa aceitação em contextos mais difíceis." – outsider marketer 2 O facto de as marcas serem uma força tão ativa como é nos países mais progressistas e não o fazer em mercados onde a temática ainda é um tabu, significa que a Ikea tomou a decisão legítima de não fazer dessa causa uma frente de batalha, porque também não sei se é esse o seu papel como empresa e como marca. Para mim, um ativista é alguém que defende a sua batalha com a mesma força numa sociedade civil favorável ou não. É alguém que não se cala e que luta. As marcas não sei se lutam porque é preciso que isso não tenha uma reção muito negativa, a maioria da sociedade civil tem de estar preparada para aceitar." (Portuguese version) = "The fact that brands being such an active force in progressive countries and don't do so in markets where the issue is still taboo means that Ikea has made a legitimate decision not to make this cause a battlefront because I don't know if that's its role either (...). For me, an activist defends their battle with the same force in a favourable or unfavourable civil society. It's someone who doesn't keep quiet and who fights. I don't know if brands fight because they must ensure it doesn't have a negative reaction. The majority of civil

			society has to be ready to accept it." (English version) - outside marketer 2
			"A Ikea trabalha de forma local. Os grandes temas da comunicação são definidos globalmente, mas a forma como conta a história e localiza a história é de responsabilidade local. Globalmente, a única indicação que temos é de que não falamos destes temas em locais em que é ilegal, porque não nos sobrepomos à lei. Mesmo nos locais em que é ilegal, temos trabalho de public affairs, de ligação com os governos, mais subtil, mas que acontece para ter impacto no que pode ser uma mudança de lei, por exemplo. Não temos interesse guerras abertas com os governos." (Portuguese version) = "Overall, the only indication is that we don't talk about these issues in places where it's illegal because we don't override the law. Even where it is illegal, we have public affairs work, liaising with governments, which is more subtle but happens to have an impact on what could be a change in the law, for example. We're not interested in open wars with governments." (English version) - inside marketer 2
			"Regrettably, we have markets where it is not a good idea to support the LGBT community, and this is super sad, but I must acknowledge that we have more power as an activist brand as being a gentle friend or to have a conversation about rather than going hard. But that does not mean that it is impossible. LGBT+ rights are progressing in several places. We would love to be doing more, especially in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. In 2020 we took a position about trans rights and on a J. K. Rowling post. We received a backlash from the feminist community. It was a tough time for us. We didn't communicate in the right way, and things changed in our processes since then to make sure

			we are always communicating in a way that is kind and not divisive. My biggest frustration about brand activism is the feeling that you must have an opinion about everything every time. And we strongly believe it is better to be a little slower and more thoughtful in our response. What can we do, and how can we be more impactful? What is our position? What can we get people to do? What are we doing already? We do not want to be reactivists. We want to be activists and provoke tangible change. That is how our activism is defined." - inside marketer 3 "We practised diversity in a global vision, but we have local diversity action plans. Country by country, function by function. We are working to get as specific as possible, but LGBTQ+ identity transcends borders, similar to gender identity. There are some global commonalities in some of the challenges that the community faces. However, laws are different in different countries (e.g., there are still some countries where it is illegal just to be gay. You can be killed, imprisoned, etcetera). And there are other countries where it is not illegal, but then they try to restrict the rights through other means." - inside DEI manager 5
1) What are your expectations when brands get involved in the LGBT conversation? 2) What do you expect from brands celebrating Pride?	What are your expectations when you see brands getting involved?	All groups	"I expect they are internally supporting and making sure LGBTQ people within their systems are getting access to dignified life because it would be ridiculous for them if they say that they want everyone to get a dignified life, but they don't care about their employees. It needs to be an internal thing, but from the outside, it must be more than to pop up during June." - activist 2 "Usually, I will come them out to check if they are only doing things for Pride and they do nothing else for the community, and I will consider if a brand launches a

| | | | Pride product, how much will go to the LGBT+ community or if it's something you will get only plus revenue during June. And I will look through their social media to see what they have been communicating about the LGBT+ community." - association 1

"I expect that they mean what they say. I expect when they support their employees who can have children, and we are going to provide their conditions to travel to other states where they have the choice of abortion, they also don't support the politicians that are passing these laws. If you are engaging and support Pride, you need to mean that, and it's not just empty words." - outside marketer 5

"The idea that June is Pride Month is a corporate invention with no more than five years old. The first Prides in Europe started in February, the last ones are in October, and the majority are in July in Europe. I think it's important if the Pride events could have events all year, but it's an easy win for brands. When people shouter brands only put a rainbow logo, I think we have spent 30 years asking these brands to put a rainbow in their logos, and when they started to do it, we started asking why they are doing this. We need to be careful about how we engage with brands. Why would they have a rainbow all year? Makes no sense, but they can engage in other ways." - association 4

"Diálogo, que as marcas contactem associações e comunidades; entendam os seus projetos e necessidades; entendam que para lá da bandeira arco-íris há problemas sociais, celebrações de amor e de resistência; e identifiquem o que é importante para as pessoas LGBT+ e onde podem contribuir. Não basta encher uma montra de arco-íris." (Portuguese version) = "Dialogue, that brands |

| | | | reach out to associations and communities; understand their projects and needs; understand that beyond the rainbow flag, there are social problems, celebrations of love and resistance; and identify what matters to LGBT+ people and where they can contribute. It's not enough to fill a shop window with rainbows." (English version) – association 7

"Sentimos que se começa o caminho de instrumentalização do mês do Orgulho, de roubo de todos os anos de reivindicação, quebra de silêncio, de roubo do espaço sem retorno, e pode retirar a carga simbólica e política do mês e da luta." (Portuguese version) = "We feel that Pride month is starting to be instrumentalised, stealing all the years of demands, breaking the silence, stealing space with no return, and it could take away the symbolic and political charge of the month and the struggle." (English version) - association 7

"Reciprocal conversation, a real conversation, authenticity, and commitment. I expect brands to commit to and support us financially and by educating people. Spread the word about us." - association 13 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) Celebrating Pride and being silent in the other 11 months, how does it this sound to you?
2) Isn't enough to say something only during the Pride month?
3) When a brand only celebrates Pride month, is this pinkwashing?
4) Is it wrong starting the LGBT+ conversation by celebrating the Pride month?
5) When a brand does a lot of actions during Pride but go silent in the other eleven | Why is Pride so popular among corporations?

Getting involved only during Pride month is pinkwashing? | All groups | "It is the equivalent of money laundry when you say you won't make any charitable donation until June. And then, in June, we will make all our donations to the LGBTQ community, as they will appreciate, we see them and the money. However, every other month of the year, you act against LGBT people. It is money laundry. I always say: you cannot just pop up for one time. You can use that one time and say that every single sale you do during June goes towards charitable organizations, or if you partner up with one single organization, that organizations have the legitimacy to make you accountable. Are you advocating for LGBTQ+ people during the other eleven months?" - |

| months of the year, can we say they are supporters of the LGBT+ inclusivity? | | | activist 2

"It's not enough to do that if you don't want to only get the pink pound. It is how to embed that through the year, but a brand must start somewhere, and there are many steps to get to that point where a brand fully embeds it, but it's not enough. That works for a while, but you can't continue giving that excuse all way through." - association 1

"When a brand does a lot of actions during Pride but go silent in the other eleven months of the year is performative allyship, that's supporting the queer community only for the benefit of me as the businesses and for my marketing and PR machine. It's not really to truly advance inclusivity within the queer community or for the queer community. It's not about giving out rainbow key chains for a Pride parade to give about, but is about how I am advancing the welfare of my queer employees, what am I doing for healthcare for all employees, etc." - association 4

"Brands must position themselves during Pride. It is important as part of the LGBT community. But this is not enough. Changing the logo during Pride is important, but if this is the only thing during the year, it can be bad. We always recommend working all year and working with specialists. There are plenty of associations around the world able to work with brands to help them understand the needs of the LGBT community inside and outside and to create programs. Companies that are not saying anything throughout the year because they don't have anything to say are not doing anything inside the company that it's relevant. In my experience, when companies don't communicate, normally it's not because |

			they don't want to communicate, but it's because they have nothing to say." - outside marketer 7 "I am not interested in companies that are not doing the work. With the Standards of Conducts for Business, we wanted that if you say that you want to be LGBT-friendly, that's enough for us to endorse these standards. You don't have to be perfect. I need you to say that you are on a journey to try to align your policies and practices to the international standards of the human rights of LGBT people. From time to time, I get angry with companies because if they are not living the values, they are proclaiming, they are hurting the LGBT community." - other 4 "This is a discussion about pinkwashing and rainbow capitalism. I think it's a fair discussion to have. As Pride members, we expect that brands are committed to our community all year round, and we want to see progress with and within these companies. When we look at our partners, they do all of that. During the Pride month, they do more than they do during the year. Don't do it only to sell more products. That is inappropriate." - association 2
1) How do you measure a rainbow campaign? 2) How do you evaluate the results? 3) Is it possible to measure activism campaigns?	How should brands develop and implement an LGBT marketing strategy? How do you measure the results?	All groups	"We have different ways of looking at it. The social media reach and engagement, the amount of money raised/ donated, among other things." - association 3 "Perceber por vendas – se tens uma edição limitada de Pride de produtos com os lucros a 100% a irem para uma associação; a médio/longo prazo, as marcas têm várias ferramentas para sentir o pulso do consumidor. Eu consigo perceber se a Kérastase é uma marca de confiança na Europa, e se for melhorando isto, significa que estou a fazer um bom trabalho" (Portuguese version) = "Understanding sales: if you have a limited edition

			Pride product with 100 per cent of the profits going to an association; in the medium to long term, brands have various tools to feel the pulse of the consumer. I can tell if Kérastase is a trusted brand in Europe, and if I'm improving this, it means I'm doing a good job." (English version) – insider marketer 1
			"Há sempre por base um histórico, como é que a marca funciona no desenvolvimento de campanhas. No nosso caso, o começo é sempre: Qual é a necessidade? E a necessidade é evidente, e passa por entender como conseguimos ajudar a comunidade. Há um brainstorming, em que a conclusão é enviar o lucro todo para uma ONG com impacto direto na comunidade. Depois, escolhemos um produto, que seja o mais transversal possível, comunicação e depois implementação." - inside marketer 1
			"There's no real science about that. It is always a challenge. You can always ask if your staff is feeling better. Internally, you have complete control. Externally, if you are a champion of change, you need to look if that's creating change where you want to. Sometimes you must accept that what you are doing is creating soft progress in terms of cultural change rather than looking to something that is a statistic and a tangible win." - other 2
			"In the case of Levi's, it has provided long-term support and supported two of our urgent appeals. So, there's a very tangible example of Levi's giving money to support life rescuing of LGBT lives or people and difficult places." - association 5
			"Yes, you can measure the impact of having a purpose. When you want to capture something that it's intangible,

			that it's in people's minds, you need to ask them. So, you do brand studies to understand what people think about the brand and what attributes your brand states (brand attributes). It is measurable, but it is expensive." - outside marketer 12
1) To celebrate Pride, what are the guidelines? 2) What are the main things to create a good marketing activism campaign? 3) How can a brand come from zero to hero? 4) Queer imagery can be a good first step or not? 5) How can a brand select the right cause? Partnering up with associations is important to improve results? 6) What are the biggest mistakes brands do when they want to get started? 7) Quite leadership is a bad sign when brands want to get involved?	What are the steps to create communications and change management strategies?	All groups	"Perguntem aos vossos trabalhadores. Comecem de dentro para fora. O que é que os vossos trabalhadores acham, qual é a opinião deles, sobre envolverem-se em questões da comunidade LGBT, da comunidade deles? Outro elemento importante é que se pergunte a pessoas da comunidade, ou seja garantir que as pessoas da comunidade dentro da organização são envolvidas, porque é fácil achar que sim envolvendo apenas pessoas que não integram a comunidade." (Portuguese version) = "Ask your workers. Start from the inside out. What do your employees think (...) about getting involved in LGBT community issues, in their community? Another element is to ask people from the community to guarantee that people from the community within the organisation are involved." (English version) - activist 1 "Os ativistas não têm a linguagem corporate. Eu posso dominá-la, mas não tenho necessariamente de a ter ou dominar e, portanto, às vezes há um hiato entre o que ao ativista diz que é o que precisam e o que um diretor de RH entende o que a empresa precisa, e é neste meio termo que estaria a solução, mas ainda nem sequer estamos aí." - activist 3 "It is essential to work with NGOs and associations. And it also lands legitimacy. If you are working on LGBT issues but you are not working within the community or showcasing the LGBT community at the forefront of that, you are doing more harm than good. You are not placing those voices that need to elevate~. It is about legitimacy

| | | | and efficiency, and it makes more sense for long-term progress." - outside marketer 1

"One of the biggest mistakes brands make when they want to get started is not having their house in order first: not having the right message and messenger to deliver the messages. Having a message that is not true to who you are in the company and feels inauthentic. And treating us not with respect but in a more paternalizing way." - outside marketer 5

The report sets out recommendations for companies to apply a real commitment to diversity and the LGTBIQ+ collective:
- "If companies want to avoid pinkwashing, they must position themselves on these issues at different times of the year, not just in June and July.
- The more complex the social situation, the more key the support. The commitment to this diversity is crucial. Companies cannot maintain a complicit silence.
- CEOs must be more protagonists. They cannot be absent from the conversation.
- Doing versus telling by the specialists. It must develop LGTBIQ+ diversity programs with associations to generate points of contact and conversation with the outside world.
- Avoid general messages and influence the collective pain points. Conversations must be worked on through dialogue with the people in the community, both inside and outside the company, to understand where their pain points are.
- Mobilise employees and make leadership visible. Making LGBT+ leadership visible among employees helps both listening and dissemination, as well as diversifying the traditional, classic and stereotyped |

leadership models." - outside marketer 7

"Marketing the rainbow is the last stage in the diversity program of a company. The first stage is developing an HR policy of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and properly executed, where the companies sign to pay attention to all employees, to support them and give platforms to be themselves. The second phase is supplier diversity, where the company says it wants 5% of its purchases from companies run by women, and 5% by LGBT+ people, etc. The last stage of diversity is marketing and communication. It is marketing the rainbow. Marketing the rainbow means showing the company LGBT+ diversity in campaigns, above the line and below the activities. It can't be done with any credibility if you don't have the first stage of the process in order. The internal diversity should be defined and executed before you can go to the market and communication sides." - outside marketer 11

"You know there needs to be kind of clarity around goals and expectations and that vision of what you are trying to strive for. But then what are the concrete steps that the organization needs to take to achieve those goals? Your strategy must be built on an in-depth assessment of your workforce and workplace. What does the environment look like? It is not just who the people are but what is the culture you are creating. You need support from your leaders, your CEO, and the top of the organization. You need an inspiring strategy yet actionable enough, so all employees, people, managers, and executives can participate. And then it is important to celebrate your wins and progress because diversity, equity and inclusion are a long-term proposition. While you will have quick wins along the way, you need to be prepared for a

			multiyear multifaceted journey." - inside DEI manager 5
1) What does it mean to be authentic? 2) How can a company prevent of being seen as exploitative or inauthentic? 3) How do you work to be authentic? 4) What are the key values a brand should have? 5) Is it all about long-term commitments? 6) When a corporation takes a side or is vocal, it is important to see it as a long-term strategy? 7) Being an educator is a way to be authentic? 8) Does activism must have an education side? 9) Is it possible to understand if a company is or is not authentic?	Is it possible to be authentic and have a marketing and communication plan for what your corporation does regards diversity, equity and inclusion without being perceived as exploitation (and doing pinkwashing)?	All groups	"For gay businesses, it's about getting attention and getting people to see them as part of the business's ecosystem. As the new generations take their place in society, those generations have different expectations for what companies should and should not do, and that starts with companies being authentic. That starts with putting your money where your mouth is and putting your mouth where money is. Companies must pay attention to this and be consistent about it, because if they don't it will come back to hurt them." - outside marketer 5 "Authentic for me means that if it's saying you are supporting Pride, it goes to Pride. If you want to support the broader LGBT community great but say that. But you need to make sure your LGBT employees feel support, you give the same rights of any gender, etc. It's the duty of Pride to check that up before you accept them. We have a phrase in the States: You walk the walk and you talk the talk. And that's what businesses need to do. Companies that want to foster trust with the queer community need to me mindful of you know what? Maybe you need to look at other businesses practices that are going against the interests of the queer community because if that's found out you are enrolling the trust within the LGBT community and their allies. In my book I talk about the concept of silent collision, where you don't say something when somebody else makes a negative statement about queers, for example, and when that executives don't say something, people can interpret that silence as supporting it. Any leader needs to recuse that silence." - association 4 "I think it is essential. The work inside the company reflects what we are saying on the outside. Any

| | | | celebration of Pride or sale of products related to Pride needs to walk the talk. It is imperative before we go out with an external voice that we have our internal policy correct, so we have a diversity network called The Body Shop Together Network, which has published a Work in Pride chapter which outlines the specific policies that we have in place to support the LGBT+ communities. What we say on the outside need to match up with what we are doing for our colleagues on the inside." - inside marketer 3

"Para mim, ser inclusivo não é um valor, deverá ser estrutural, sendo que não podemos pensar só na Europa. Não deve ser um valor per si, neste momento, deve já ser parte integrante do respeito, e o respeito vem por equilíbrio, pelas diversas preferências sexuais (em que uma empresa não tem nada a ver com isso), enfim pelo que quer que seja. A comunicação é importante e útil para as empresas mostrarem que estão a fazer esse caminho." (Portuguese version) = "For me, being inclusive is not a value. It should be structural, and we can't just think about Europe. It shouldn't be a value in itself at the moment. It should already be an integral part of respect, and respect comes through balance and different sexual preferences (which a company has nothing to do with). Communication is important and useful for companies to show that they are making this path." (English version) - inside marketer 4

"What is inauthentic is putting a rainbow logo during Pride month but having a homophobic, transphobic, track record not supporting the LGBT+ employees, not having benefits that are for same-sex couples, among others. These things must be happened so what they are saying trough marketing is accurate. The backstage |

communication is incredibly important and can't be broadcasted, but companies can say they support the protection, wellbeing, and decriminalization of the LGBT+ community. Then, the corporation has to understand how it is going to operationalize that public declaration and how that's going to look like. It might be collaborations with local activists, it might be partnerships with advocacy organizations in different forms, and there is also recruiting and enhancing talent." - association 9

"The fight for LGBT+ people is a fight for liberation. If you are LGBT-friendly, you contribute to that liberation, which is the test for authenticity, and that the test for authenticity. What is your contribution to the LGBT+ people liberation? Are you using your influence or marketing tools? Are you supporting the non-profit associations? Leadership measures the internal engagement success but the contribution to this liberation is the ultimate talk." - other 4

"Firstly, brands need to have their own LGBT networks, they need to have employees focus groups. You need to show to your people that you accept them the way they are every day of the year. Once you have this, you need to have the engagement of senior management, or it is going to be very difficult for these networks to have visibility. And then, when you have the credibility, think about you are going to get involved in Pride month, go public." - activist 14

"Doing your thing in June is a ticket box, is performative. It is mandatory to include the employees in the process. Having a rainbow logo during Pride does nothing for the LGBT+ cause. Using queer imagery isn't enough because

it might not come with anything else. It is just visual. I am not saying you can't do the rainbows, but let's do it in a much more intentional way." - activist 15

"These are long term commitments for us. It's not just making statements when there's a controversy that means that you're supporting them. We have a Levi Strauss Foundation. We give grants to organizations. We are writing amicus briefs to the court on behalf of legislation in support of those communities. We are engaging with groups within the community. At Strauss and Company, we're guided by values. That's kind of our North star. We also have put together brand values framework which guides us through a process of when a topic comes up, we ask key questions, we look to see if this is an area in which we've advocated in the past. We look to see if using our voice is going to help move the conversation forward or draw attention to it with key stakeholders, government officials, people in positions of power that can make change. We are very strategic about when and how we use our voice because we realize that if we use it strategically it is a statement. But if we use it all the time, it could become meaningless." - inside marketer 5

"It is very easy for everybody to start throwing rocks at companies and saying that you are only doing this for pinkwashing purposes. I hate the fact that an organization thinks all it needs to do is for June ever year to put a rainbow on its logo, and the world is great and they can see that's fantastic. If it's just performative, it is something I really hate. We always have to be careful though, because it is very difficult to say: you are doing this for that reason. How inclusive are you as an organization? This is a way better measure than just putting a rainbow on your logo. The trouble is that is not

easy to get in into organizations and to find out what they are doing. So, the temptation is always to go to the first easy win and that is to say what it looks from the outside, which is why companies are tempted to say: well, forget all the other stuff, let's just make sure that the public sees us as being LGBT+ inclusive, but if that happens to the extent of exclusion of everything else, then it's pure pinkwashing. But what do we mean about pinkwashing? Pinkwashing is an organization that is wanting to be seen as LGBT+ inclusive but really doesn't do enough work to be LGBT+ inclusive, it just wants to world to think it is, organizations are tempted to be just very visible, with the rainbow logos, etc., instead of getting into changing their culture." - other 2

"Posso dar o exemplo da Ikea, que é uma marca que trabalhamos na UZINA. A Ikea tem uma tradição de colocar casais LGBT+ na sua publicidade, de fazer o pride, mas a Ikea antes de falar desse assunto, e há um propósito que é publicitário e que é tentar representar a realidade que existe, há uma legitimidade que está relacionada com eles praticarem dentro de casa. Ou seja, têm um conjunto de boas práticas de aceitação e promoção de pessoas que pertencem a estas minorias. Quando uma marca como a Ikea vem falar de Pride, existe uma legitimidade, não é estranho." (Portuguese version) = "I can give the example of Ikea, a brand we work with at UZINA. Ikea has a tradition of featuring LGBT+ couples in its advertising, Pride, but before Ikea talks about this subject. There is an advertising purpose of trying to represent the reality, but there is a legitimacy related to them practising within their home. In other words, they have a set of good practices for accepting and promoting people who belong to these minorities. When a brand like Ikea comes to talk about Pride, there is

			legimacy. It is not strange." (English version) - outside marketer 8
1) To do LGBT marketing campaign, you must have LGBT employees? 2) HR policies are one of the major actions for companies to make sure they are authentic? 3) Internally is the most important step? 4) When a brand is vocal externally but silent internally, what does it mean?	What are the questions of how to initiate and implement successful LGBT corporate advocacy?	All groups	"If you don't have any LGBT people, then you must ask yourself why you do not have any. Or do you have, but they don't want to talk about it because they are afraid that's going to affect their careers? You want to have an organization that will welcome LGBT people. If you target LGBT audiences, but you don't have LGBT people that are comfortable of being out as LGBT people, the company won't be perceived as authentic." - association 1 "Having an HR policy that is also specifically dedicated to LGBT+ people and takes in consideration, for example, parental leave for all employees and family's constellations globally is a way to show that corporations walk the talk." - other 1 "You do need the staff. The staff needs to be onboard. The organization must integrate rather than assimilate, or they will chase diversity instead of inclusion. Diversity without inclusion is worse than nothing because it puts a bunch of people together who can't relate to each other. The next step is to ensure these people know how to interrelate and achieve the best of each other and take advantage of their differences. But you also need the organization to step in. So, it is a mix of the two. You need the strategic approach from the organization and the tactical approach from the staff to come together to this perfect synergy." - other 2 "Whether it is internal messaging or external, we have an extensive list of stakeholders that we need to socialize with to ensure that everyone is aligned because we live times that when you speak out there is backlash. We have seen the trends of go woke go broke and we saw what

			happened to Disney in Florida, where Ron De Santis took away some of the tax incentives that they enjoyed as a company. So, it is important, especially that your top leadership is aligned to how you are going to use your voice because there could be ramifications, social, political, cultural, in your company." - inside DEI manager 5
1) Pride imagery is enough to be authentic? 2) Is it ok to have only the symbolic side or this might be dangerous for brands? 3) Putting a rainbow logo during Pride month is enough? 4) Merchandising the rainbow is a risk to empty the rainbow from its meaning? 5) Placing a rainbow in their logo is a strong action to do in the Ghana context?	Rainbow logos, Pride collections, and partnering up with activists is enough?	All groups	"We need to be cautions of where we think the rainbow stands from and what it is meant to do. It's not even the full rainbow, it misses colours. So, the flag and this fight that we been having about including more of the other flags in there, need to be understood that they serve different purposes. The original six stripes flag it has its own purpose. When the lesbian flag was designed, it had its purpose." - activist 2 "No because it feels just performative. If a rainbow it's all you do it feels you are following the crowd but not being meaningful. Companies have to start somewhere, but you also have to say what it means and why you are doing it and you have to talk about what leadership steps you are talking to engage with our community, internally and externally. So, just saying Happy Pride isn't enough." - outside marketer 5 "You can't just through money at us or putting a rainbow flag in June. What else are you doing? What are you doing more substantively?" - outside marketer 6 "Yes, it's enough, but it's better if you do more, from publishing a story to promote an internal event to your employees, for example. But a pure financial arrangement works for some businesses and Pride, but people are expecting more than just giving money." - association 4

			"It is definitely symbolic, but what I can see is that the barre is constantly moving, so visibility is important, and Pride is about visibility in its essence, because without that you can't be political and do demanding's. Visibility is good when you have a lack of visibility. Once you have enough visibility, the power is moving and that's no longer enough, and this is what we are seeing. Companies can work with us to make the world a little bit less awful, to create a better workplace environment." - other 1

"For me, it's using the experience of being LGBT+, which for many people it's a difficult experience, and I don't like it. Are you trying to make the world a better place for LGBT+ people? If yes, great, if not, stop using our symbols." - activist 10

"That was a time that using that inclusive was really significant. That was often when was being used a symbol of this is a safe place or a welcoming place. As the community is further accepted, it can be hard to know what's behind that rainbow. What's going to matter is our interaction and experience with that company and brand." - association 9

"It's dangerous because it will erode your credibility. You're not going to have credibility and it will be as though you're not using your voice and you're not going to be able to get employees, partners, key stakeholders to buy in. Overtime that will show because your organization will continue to look the same. And when people look to you during times that aren't crisis times and you have nothing going on, they'll easily be able to see that. You know there's no real substance there." - inside DEI manager 5 |
| **1)** What does Pride mean to you? | What does Pride mean to | All groups | "Pride will always be a protest to awaken the spirit of |

2) What does Pride mean to the brand? **3)** What's the meaning of Pride?	you?		protest, rage and dissatisfaction with Queer people. Pride was never about straight people. Pride was always about Queer people saying we will be saying we will collectively bring our voices together and shout" - activist 2 "Pride it's a test of fundamental freedoms where Pride happens for the first time. Beyond that, Pride it's creating visibility and representation, celebrating all the achievements that the movement conquered, raising awareness on the issues that still need to change." - association 3 "Pride has gone from riots and protests against police violence and brutality against LGBT+ to this speech of human rights and the sacredness of the individual, and regardless of if you identify or not as an LGBT+ person, you can see yourself as a part of the movement – this is what the mainstem side does. However, becoming more mainstream is one of the accusations as it became more party and less political, and what we see is that many corporations see more the party side of the movement. But throughout the partnership, companies start to see more of this political side of the movement, as they realize there's this other side of the coin, which is fighting for your rights, how internationally the community is still marginalized." - other 1 "For companies, Pride is a party and an opportunity to make fun company parties. For activism, it is a demonstration and a fight against discrimination, for rights and acceptance, and for people who can be themselves in their streets. It is important to have companies focused on national and international problems. I also see Pride as an opportunity for many

			people to be themselves." - activist 11 "Pride tem um duplo significado. Tem um significado político porque é o culminar da reivindicação do coletivo LGBT+, como coletivo conseguimos evoluir de uma manifestação com poucas pessoas, que usavam máscaras para não serem reconhecidas, para uma luta e uma celebração. O orgulho tem uma parte de reivindicação e de luta, para reclamar o que não tivemos ou não temos; e uma parte de celebração, Fomos capazes de partilhar esta luta e esta celebração que não pertencem ao coletivo, mas que celebram de qualquer das formas, e sem ter vítimas. Somos um movimento pacifista, alegre e por direitos, e isto foi uma das grandes conquistas que tivemos no movimento LGBT+. Passamos de manifestações pequenas para fazer, em Madrid, o maior evento anual na cidade. Não creio que sem o orgulho tivéssemos conseguido o casamento entre pessoas do mesmo sexo em 2005, e que foi a base para a posterior constituição de direitos que culminou com a lei trans e LGBT+ a nível estatal." - other 9"
1) In 2022 GLAAD worked with PUMA for a Pride campaign. How was it?	In 2022 GLAAD worked with PUMA for a Pride campaign. How was it?	GLAAD – association 9	"They all have NDA's. L'Oréal also worked with us also. It takes different forms, sometimes it is us answering questions, for example. We can also say that something is happening and that you should do something about it, identifying opportunities, and understanding what can be done publicly and behind the scenes."
The partnership with Happy Socks is a long-term one and how do you do it?	The partnership with Happy Socks is a long-term one and how do you do it?	InterPride - association 13	"Happy Socks have merchandising. They are incredibly generous, as part of the sales come to us. I have no problem helping a brand marketing itself if some of the profits come to us. There's a lot of stigmas about this in our community, and I understand why people feel that way, but there's people in those organizations who are trying to make positive change and that's what we need to continue focus on. And that's how we work with our

			brands."
When did you decide to get involved in the LGBT+ conversation?	When did you decide to get involved in the LGBT+ conversation?	Inside marketers	"Tem três dimensões: comunicação, consistência e funcionalidade. A dimensão de funcionalidade quer dizer que eu não posso deixar de fora qualquer tipo de necessidades capilares, portanto há um lado de oferta que é relevante ter em conta, no caso da Kérastase. Isto tem também um lado financeiro, em ajudar entidades que tenham um impacto sobre a comunidade específica – Kérastase lançou uma Pride Editions todos os anos em que todo o lucro é canalizado para uma ONG escolhida e relevante, aprovada para cada país. Terceiro, a consistência a nível de apoio e de mensagem, porque surfar a onda do marketing é fácil." - inside marketer 1 "To be honest, I will have to see when it started. During my time at The Body Shop, we have been always celebrating Pride, we have a very active internal diversity network. It is kind of like been business as usual since always. We had a campaign in the 2000s around HIV/AIDS awareness, but this wasn't LGBT+ focused, it was youth-focused. But we had several campaigns recently, particularly in North America, as the issues had become really disturbing there." - inside marketer 3
A Ikea é ativista ou aliada do movimento LGBT?	A Ikea é ativista ou aliada do movimento LGBT?	Inside marketer 2	"A Ikea tem uma estratégia de sustentabilidade e de people que se cruza em tudo o que são os temas de diversidade, igualdade e inclusão. São temas como um todo, como um tema de direitos humanos e de fazer o que está certo, intrínseco ao ADN da empresa, de ter uma visão humanista da sociedade e do papel que empresas devem ter em tornar a sociedade melhor com a sua ação. No que diz respeito à parte de diversidade e inclusão, nós começamos há muitos, Ikea global, a atacar o tema do género. Foi por onde começamos. Depois, começamos a perceber que havia outras dimensões da diversidade para as quais não estávamos tão despertos. A questão da

			identidade de género e da sexualidade foi uma das áreas que surgiu, começando pelo facto de ser uma população que na maior parte dos casos é discriminada por não poder assumir aquilo que é ou quer ser. Ter pessoas que não são felizes e que não são elas próprias quando estão a trabalhar não faz sentido, e começamos com um trabalho de consciencialização interna, e depois fomos para fora, como é que podemos ajudar mais pessoas fora. O tema LGBT surge nesta estrutura e nesta estratégia mais alargada de diversidade e inclusão."
Is the Body Shop an activist brand for the LGBT+ rights and acceptance?	Is the Body Shop an activist brand for the LGBT+ rights and acceptance?	Inside marketer 3	"Yes, we are an activist brand for human rights and this includes LGBT+ issues."
Do you know how, why and when Levi's decided to join the LGBT+ conversation and be vocal about it?	Do you know how, why and when Levi's decided to join the LGBT+ conversation and be vocal about it?	Inside DEI manager 5	"We have been a company that has used our voice to advocate for equity. We were among the first to integrate our factories during and before the time of civil rights. We started advocating, I believe really fiercely for the LGBT+ community during the AIDS crisis in the 1980s. We're looking to represent the communities that we serve and a big community that we served was the LGBTQ community. And as they started to face challenges with the HIV AIDS crisis, we stepped up. There's an infamous story of our CEO at the time handing out condoms. In the lobby, as workers were coming into work because he was fearing for the lives and the safety of the workers."
Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?	Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?	All groups	"There are different levels of advocacy in the world. There is visibility advocacy, legal advocacy, social justice advocacy, and so on. What brands need to be very conscious of is if they pick one rather than acknowledging that one sits in this great web, they can't be defensive when called out of it. We have brands merchandising the rainbow, but their production lines are in countries where their employees are explored. So, as consumers we can ask: What is your politics? When I buy something, I am making a declaration to the world." - activist 2

| | | | "I have been cautious about how corporate Pride has become. Twenty years ago, seeing a brand marching in Pride was incredible. Nowadays, seeing a three-hour parade full of politicians and marketing will do more harm than good. First, it questions the legitimacy of the movement and takes away its social issues and concerns. It is a marketing stunt and a way to reach a new consumer segment, not a way of staying alongside those issues. To march, you should also care about the health of trans people or the security of LGBT youth or the rights of LGBT refugees. It's not just marketing, as there is something inherently political in the movement that businesses need to get on board with it or don't bother. We need to go back to that place. Also, if you are integrating that with your core values, you must care about that value throughout everyone you work with. If you are not prepared to address those issues in other contexts, perhaps you are not ready to integrate that as a core value." - outside marketer 1

"I'm sure what motivates a lot of brands is the perception that we are a rich, diverse audience with a lot of potential. That's fine, but what should motivate them is an honest, authentic interest in engaging with our community because we are real loyal consumers." - outside marketer 5

"Business needs to take steps to get involved: (1) Make sure it is doing well internally. They are supportive of their LGBT+ staff; (2) To look beyond the four walls and think about the impact they are having in the communities where they are operating and think about how to support LGBT+ rights externally; (3) Learning and consultation to make sure that they are talking to LGBT+ organizations, |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | to activists; (4) Making a long-term commitment and not just during Pride and providing flexible support; (5) and sharing that learning, collaborating with other businesses. I would say brand activism within the LGBT+ context is where a business is providing tangible support to advance LGBT+ rights externally." - association 5

"Money and time. Look at the areas where you have an impact and make donations or give everyone in the business one day off used for charitable contributions. We could secure millions of hours of support for organizations under-supported. There's a gay world which is not full of parades and rainbows. It is full of violence and death, and raising this awareness is very important. We can't let the pink washers pretend they are doing the right things when they are not because then the people doing the right things are losing the voices that we need them to have." - association 8

"Brands are already looking for ways to advocate, and I think brands are doing more advocacy than activism. Corporates and activists are not friends. So, advocacy through lobbying and trying to change things and stereotypes is more friendly to corporations. Thus, corporations work with associations that do activism, and work together, as corporates do levels of advocacy, are beginning to speak up. Brand activism still needs to be explored in the corporation's space to understand why organizations are uncomfortable being more vocal." - other 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

4.2. Descriptive Codification for interview clusters

		Question Cluster
Respect human rights	LGBT facts	What are the questions of how to initiate and implement successful LGBT corporate advocacy?
	Time-space	Why is Pride so popular among corporations? Getting involved only during Pride month is pinkwashing?
Workplace	Internal support	How should brands develop and implement an LGBT marketing strategy? How do you measure the results? Is it possible to be authentic and have a marketing and communication plan for what your corporation does regards diversity, equity and inclusion without being perceived as exploitation (and doing pinkwashing)?
Marketplace	Product orientation	Rainbow logos, Pride collections, and partnering up with activists is enough?
Act in the public sphere	Imagery	Rainbow logos, Pride collections, and partnering up with activists is enough?
	Collaborations and partnerships	How can the private sector partner up with LGBT associations and activists? What are your requirements to accept a brand as a partner or to collaborate with a brand? Is Partnering up with associations a crucial step to supporting the LGBT community genuinely? What are the steps to create communications and change management strategies? In 2022 GLAAD worked with PUMA for a Pride campaign. How was it? The partnership with Happy Socks is a long-term one and how do you do it?
	Engagement with the community	Brands have the legitimacy to celebrate Queer people? How and why? Why are brands getting involved? What are the challenges for the LGBT community nowadays? Brands can be activists, or is it a romantic vision? Is it different being an ally, advocate and activist? Allyship, advocacy or activism. Are these 3 types of engagement accessible to brands? Can brands make a real difference in LGBT community lives? What does it mean to be an activist?

		Supporting the community in the UK is different from supporting it in Saudi Arabia. How do you manage?
		What are your expectations when you see brands getting involved?
		When did you decide to get involved in the LGBT+ conversation?
		A Ikea é ativista ou aliada do movimento LGBT?
		Is the Body Shop an activist brand for the LGBT+ rights and acceptance?
		Do you know how, why and when Levi's decided to join the LGBT+ conversation and be vocal about it?
	Vague messaging	What does Pride mean to you?
Other	n.a.	Would you like to add something else I didn't ask?

Appendix 5 – Secondary Data: Sample Profile Extended

5.1. Internal analysis of the 20 selected brands regarding their public positioning

Brand	Purpose	Mission	Vision	Values	Employee Resource groups	Relevant partnerships
Control Portugal	To meet the needs of an evolving contemporary lifestyle. Solutions to live sexuality in full harmony with who you are.	Not found.	Not found.	Sustainable Parenting. Human Rights; Equal opportunities; Diversity; Parent's and children's wellbeing; Sustainability.	Not found.	Not found.
Abercrombie & Fitch	"We are here for you on the journey to being and becoming who you are.". Embrace diversity in all its forms. Work to ensure that each associate and customer feels included, respected, supported, and empowered. Participant in the UN Global Compact since 2019.	Building leaders of inclusive culture.	A culture that advances respect and inspires unity.	Honesty; integrity; Respect. Three principles: Championing Diversity Across the Associate Journey. Cultivating A Culture of Belonging Developing Inclusive Customer Experiences.	Pillars: allyship, community, celebration and education. 4 groups, 1 for the LGBT+ community: Pride & Allies. Product teams create collections to enable change and awareness.	GLSEN since 2017. The Trevor Project since 2010. Stonewall Columbus. Human Rights Campaign. 2022 perfect score on HRC CEI: 16th year.
C&A	#Wear the Change is the motto. Guided by international rights standards, outlined, among others by the UN Standards of Conduct for Tackling Discrimination against LGBTI people.	Create an apparel company that offer superior design, quality and value to the consumer.	Making Sustainable Fashion the New Normal.	Care for People and Planet; Consumer-obsessed; Keep it Simple; Love togetherness; Forward thinking and acting.	Not found.	Not found.
Levi's	Clothes celebrate rugged individuality and self-expression. Creating a workplace where people	To sustain responsible commercial success as a	We are the embodiment of the energy and events of our	Civil Rights; Corporate Integrity and transparency; Empathy Sustainability; Worker's	Sense of belonging, supporting change. 3 LGBT+ groups: BeYou Alliance -	GiveOut International.

	from all walks of life feel confident that their voices will be heard, and their contributions are welcomed and celebrated.	global marketing company of branded apparel.	times, inspiring people with a pioneering spirit.	well-being; Arts education; Equality, inclusivity and nondiscrimination in the workplace.	Greater China & East Asia Pacific; Inside Out - Americas; Unlabeled - Europe & SAMEA.	
Crate and Barrel	Curate inspiration for the home, connecting the work of artisans and designers to people and places. Code of Conduct based on SA8000 social accountability standard by Social Accountability International. Compliant with the California Transparency in the Supply Chains Act.	To help people love how they live in moments that matter.	Not found.	Transparency; Cooperation; Environmentally Friendly; Continuous improvement.	Not found.	amfori BSCI - founding members; Business Council for Democracy network; Diversity Charter Physical.
Danone Portugal	Believe that when we eat and drink, we vote for the world we want. Pillars: culture & engagement, health & safety, inclusive diversity learning, and social dialogue.	Bringing health through food to as many people as possible.	One Planet. One Health.	Humanism; Openness; Proximity; Enthusiasm.	Not found.	2022: signed the UN Standards for Business Conduct against LGBT discrimination.
Farfetch	Do What's never been done. Celebrating individuality all together, 'todos juntos', with ambitions that few can imagine.	To become the global platform for good in luxury fashion - empowering everyone to think, act and choose positively.	Not found.	Be Revolutionary; Think Global; Be Human; Be Brilliant; Todos Juntos.	Not found.	Not found.
Happy Socks	For all who think that life can never be too colorful.	To make the world a more	Bring color and happiness to the	Not found.	Not found.	InterPride.

	And that true happiness stems from the freedom to be yourself.	creative and colorful place for all is not sustainable unless we are.	world - inspiring self-expression through color, creativity, and fun.			
Harrys	Believe in better access to mental health care. 1% of sales go to support nonprofits mental health care services to men.	Believe in making the things around us better.	We created Harry's to be different from other shaving companies.	Grow Forth; Embrace the Mammoths; Own It; See the Person	Sense of community. Help foster a more inclusive workplace.	LGBT partners - Campaign Against Living Miserably, Celutions, akt.
Havaianas	World without strings. Goal: people identify themselves and feel represented.	Take extra care of each of our products from start to finish.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.
Ikea	Committed to continuing to making everyone feel at home. Inclusion is everyone's responsibility.	Offer a range of functional, well-designed home furnishing products at prices so low that as many people as possible will be able to afford them.	To create a better everyday life for the many people	Togetherness; Caring for people and planet; Cost-consciousness; Simplicity; Renew and improve; Different with a meaning; Give and take responsibility; Lead by example.	Asian-American, Pacific Islanders and South Asian; Fuerza/Latinx /Hispanic Descent; Ikea Disability Education Advocacy; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer+; African Descent; Women Empowered	Several, with 3 pillars: Accelerating for impact; Accelerator programmes; Direct investments.
Confections	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.
Lego	Play: joy of building; Pride of creation; People: succeed together; Partner promise: mutual value creation; Planet: positive impact.	Inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow.	A global force for Learning-through-Play.	Imagination; Creativity; Fun; Learning; Caring; Quality.	6 groups to support colleagues around age, women, Asian, LGBT+, disability, people of color.	World Wildlife Fund + UNICEF
L'Oréal	Beauty is a powerful force.	Contribute to a	Driving the	Passion; Innovation;	Not found.	UN LGBT

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Paris	To offer the world the best of beauty in terms to satisfy all beauty needs and desires in their infinite diversity.	society where everyone can live safely and equally. Beauty for All.	cosmetic industry with an inclination on sustainability.	Entrepreneurial spirit; Open-mindedness; Quest for excellence; Responsibility.		Standards, Open for Business, and Unstereotype Alliance.
Mercedes-Benz	Luxury of the future.	Inspire and create an exceptional place to work and to do business. One employee, one customer, one vehicle at a time.	With our design philosophy of Sensual Purity, we initiated a shift in automotive design.	Passion; Respect; Integrity; Discipline and Excellence.	Not found.	UN LGBT Standards; Signed HIV Declaration of the German AIDS Federation.
Pantone	Provides a universal language of color that enables color-critical decisions through every stage of the workflow for brands and manufacturers.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.
Polo Club	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.	Not found.
PUMA	Pushing ourselves to be better. See sustainability in much the same way. Making a team effort to reach common goals.	Forever faster. To be the Fastest Sports Brand in the World.	To be the most desirable and sustainable Sport lifestyle company in the world.	Equality and non-discrimination; Diversity Equity; Inclusion.	Not found.	Several community engagement projects – for a sustainable and inclusive community.
The Body Shop	A brand with a lot to say. Exist to fight for a fairer, more beautiful world. "This is our purpose, and it drives everything we do.".	To fight for a fairer, more beautiful world	Not found.	Community fair trade; Recycled plastics and materials in packaging; Vegan and vegetarian beauty; Cruelty free Return; Recycle; Repeat	Ethics Committee; Risk and Governance Committee Audit, Risk Management and Finance.	Not found.

				the wellbeing of future generations; Black lives matter; Fighting to empower women and girls; Work in Pride.		
Patagonia	Aim to use the resources we have - our voice, our business and our community - to do something about our climate crisis.".	We're in business to save our home planet.	Not found.	Build the best product; Cause no unnecessary harm; Use business to protect nature; Not bound by convention.	Not found.	Several under the motto: "Patagonia Partners With Planet Earth".

5.2. Internal analysis of the 20 selected brands regarding their public positioning

Brand	LGBT Public Policy commitment	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Public Policy Commitment
Control Portugal	No	Yes	No
Abercrombie & Fitch	Yes	Yes	Yes
C&A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Levi's	Yes	Yes	Yes
Crate and Barrel	No	Yes	Yes
Danone Portugal	No	Yes	Yes
Farfetch	Yes	Yes	Yes
Happy Socks	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harrys	Yes	Yes	Yes
Havaianas	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ikea	Yes	Yes	Yes
Confections	No	No	Yes
Lego	Yes	Yes	Yes
L'Oréal Paris	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mercedes-Benz	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pantone	No	No	No
Polo Club	No	No	No
PUMA	Yes	Yes	Yes
The Body Shop	Yes	Yes	Yes
Patagonia	No	Yes	Yes