Human-First Content Tops Brandwatch's List of 11 Digital Marketing Trends for 2027

71% of marketers expect human-first content to shape digital marketing in 2027, while online conversations about AI-generated ads rose 240% over the past year

CHICAGO, Nov. 24, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Brandwatch, a Cision company and a global leader in social intelligence and social media management, today released its annual *Digital Marketing Trends 2027* report. Human-first content emerged as the top trend among the marketers surveyed, while 59% said optimizing content for AI systems will shape their strategies. Together, the findings point to two priorities for brands in 2027: Creating work people value and making sure they can find it.

The report combines insights from a survey of more than 1,000 marketers with analysis of more than 106 million online conversations, bringing together marketers' expectations for the year ahead with evidence of what audiences are already discussing.

The findings point to a fundamental shift in digital marketing: As AI makes content faster and easier to produce, simply publishing more is no longer enough. Brands must give audiences compelling reasons to trust them, recognize them, and choose them.

"Marketers are thinking about how their brands show up in AI search. Audiences are asking a different question when they see an ad: Who made this, and can I trust it?" said Amy Jones, Chief Marketing Officer at Cision. "For a brand planning next year's campaigns, that puts real value on what its own people can bring to the work. An expert who can explain a difficult topic or a creative idea people recognize as yours gives audiences a reason to pay attention."

Key Digital Marketing Trends for 2027

The report identifies where the biggest shifts will take place in the coming year and what they mean for brands and the marketing teams behind them. Among the top takeaways:

- **Human creativity becomes a competitive advantage:** Online conversations about AI-generated ads surged 240% in the past year, and the sentiment Brandwatch identified was predominantly negative. In the survey, 71% of marketers say human-first content will shape digital marketing in 2027, making it the top trend identified in the survey.
- **Brands must give audiences reasons to trust them:** Conversations about whether content is AI-made grew 186% in the past year, signaling greater scrutiny of what's real and who's behind it. In response, brands have an opportunity to build credibility through transparency, verifiable claims, and the voices of their own experts. More than a third of marketers (34%) see expert-led marketing as a trend for 2027.
- **Marketers are spending more time on content as an antidote to algorithmic overload:** As audiences grow more selective about what deserves their attention, brands have an opportunity to create more substantive, engaging content that rewards it. Among the marketers surveyed about their workload, nearly half (49%) say they spend more time on content creation and strategy than they did two to three years ago, reflecting the growing investment in content that offers greater depth and value.
- **AI search changes the rules of brand visibility:** As consumers increasingly turn to AI-powered search for answers and recommendations, brands must build visibility beyond their own websites and channels. Nearly six in 10 marketers (59%) say optimizing content for AI systems will shape their 2027 strategies. For brands, that raises a practical question about what people learn about them when they ask an AI tool for a recommendation.
- **Brands must work harder to earn their place in communities:** With organic social reach declining, brands can no longer rely on platforms to deliver audiences. Conversations around community-focused platforms such as Twitch, Discord, Substack, and Beehiiv grew 18% in the past year, while 47% of marketers say community-led activity will be a significant marketing trend in 2027.

Additional trends explore the growing demand for immersive, participatory brand experiences; the return of maximalist brand identities; increased audience scrutiny of marketing tactics; and the emergence of more sensory, tangible brand identities.

Together, the findings offer marketers a data-driven perspective on the forces reshaping digital marketing, helping them distinguish between emerging industry priorities and the audience behaviors that will ultimately determine which strategies resonate.

To explore all 11 trends and discover what they mean for marketers, download the full *Digital Marketing Trends 2027* report.

Join the webinar: What's Next for Marketing in 2027

Brandwatch will bring these findings to life during a live webinar featuring a panel of industry experts, "What's Next for Marketing in 2027: Creators on How Brands Stand Out, Earn Trust, and Get Chosen," on Dec. 15, 2026. **Learn more and register.**

Research Methodology

The *Digital Marketing Trends 2027* report draws on a survey of more than 1,000 marketers about the digital marketing landscape and priorities for 2027, combined with Brandwatch Consumer Research data analyzing more than 106 million online conversations between Oct. 1, 2025, and Oct. 1, 2026. Brandwatch experts also contributed their analysis and insights to validate and strengthen the findings.

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