



# The Handy Brand-y Pride Playbook 2026

*How to show up at Pride without looking like  
you panic-bought a rainbow in June.*



# *Why Pride Matters.*

**Pride isn't a fleeting calendar moment anymore. It's one of the most visible (and most scrutinised) stages that brands step onto all year.**

**Inside this Playbook, we'll break down:**

**What Pride looks like in 2026 (bigger, louder, more complex)**

**How people move through Pride events**

**What Pride brand experiences people engage with (and what they ignore)**

**Real examples of what works and why**

**How to plan across the full Pride "touring" season**

**Basically: how to show up authentically and give people a reason to engage.**

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# The Pride *moment.*

Pride has evolved from protest to celebration to a summer-long, multi-city UK experience.

o And people are paying attention. Critically.



**75%**

*of Brits think brands engage with Pride more for PR than genuine support*

**Just 7%**

*think brands are actually sincere*

**So yes, it matters. But showing up badly is noticed, too.**

# Why Pride is *worth it.*

Pride is a huge cultural moment. But done carefully, it's a huge commercial one too.

- 75% of consumers say diversity & inclusion influences what they buy
- LGBTQ+ audiences and allies represent millions of UK consumers
- Pride events attract high-spend, high-dwell audiences across retail, food & drink and lifestyle

**Done well, Pride builds relevance, loyalty and long-term brand equity.**



## And importantly:

Younger audiences expect brands to show up

**58%** vs **34%**

*of Gen Z support brands actively promoting LGBTQ+ equality*

*of Baby Boomers*

**This is one of the few moments where brand values directly influence brand choice.**

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# Pride 2026 *in numbers.*

Pride has become a national summer circuit, with millions attending across the UK.



**170k+**

at Manchester Pride

**220+**

Pride events across the UK

**1.5m+**

at Pride in London

**300k+**

at Brighton Pride

**£20.5m+**

generated for Brighton's economy

**Instead of planning for one event, plan for a summer-long run.**

# Who you're actually *talking to.*

Pride isn't one crowd. It's lots of different communities, with different expectations.

**8%**

of 16–24s in the UK identify as LGBTQ+

vs

**3.7%**

Overall

Younger audiences are also more expectant:

**58%**

of Gen Z support brands actively promoting LGBTQ+ equality

vs

**34%**

of older generations

And Pride itself isn't one format either:

Grassroots



Community-first

City-wide



Interaction-led

Flagship (London/Brighton)



Fast, high-volume

The bigger the crowd, the faster you're judged.  
The smaller the space, the deeper you need to go.

# How people behave *at Pride*

Pride is fast, crowded, and choose-your-own-adventure.

People move quickly, dip in and out and build their own experience.

And they're sharing it as they go:

- 79% of 18–35s plan to attend more live events
- But want them to feel more real, less staged



## WHAT PEOPLE ENGAGE WITH:

- Participation (make it, customise it, co-create it)
- Utility (water, shade, seating, charging)
- Discovery (new brands, creators, experiences)

## WHAT GETS OVERLOOKED:

- Stands with no clear reason to stop
- Sampling without reason
- Ideas that don't feel specific to Pride

# What works *vs* what doesn't

## What works:

- **Clear purpose:** If people understand why you're there, they engage more
- **Visible action:** Donations, partnerships, community presence
- **Consistency:** Brands that show up every year (not just June) build goodwill over time
- **Real people involvement:** Creators, performers, staff

## What gets called out:

- **Rainbow with no receipts**
- **One-month allyship**
- **Performative messaging**
- **Real people involvement**
- **Mismatch between what you say and what you do**

## Design reality:

- **You have seconds, not minutes**
- **Make it obvious, make it easy**
- **Design for crowds**

**From visibility to accountability.**

# Pride activations that worked *(and why).*

## Skittles – Give the Rainbow

Handed visibility to creators

**Worked because:** *the brand stepped back.*

## Absolut – Long-term Pride presence

Decades of consistent support across multiple events

**Worked because:** *credibility compounds.*

## Pinterest – Creator-led builds

Live, visual, interactive

**Worked because:** *people could participate.*

## NYX – Community- first spaces

Part retail, part safe space

**Worked because:** *it felt like it belonged.*

# How Pride lives *beyond the event*

01

**Behind-the-scenes**

People want to see what's actually happening on the ground

02

**Creator POV over brand POV**

Content feels more credible when it comes from real voices

03

**Utility content performs**

“What’s worth visiting, where to go, what’s good”

04

**Proof of action**

Where money goes, who’s involved, what impact is made

# Pride is a *touring* opportunity

From 100k+ city crowds to 1m+ national events, each stop offers a different scale of opportunity.



## THIS GIVES BRANDS THE CHANCE TO:

- Test, learn, evolve
- Tailor to different audiences
- Build familiarity and allyship over time

**The best Pride brands show up well, repeatedly.**

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# The opportunity *for 2026*

Pride's not about visibility anymore. It's about value.

**BRANDS NEED TO:**

Understand the space they're in

Bring something people genuinely want

Contribute to the experience

**The Pride audiences won't reward those who simply show up. They'll reward those who show up with them all season and all year long.**

We Do

**Strategy.**  
*Creative.*  
**Production.**  
*Delivery.*  
**Amplification.**



From concept to campaign, we craft full-funnel brand experiences. Blending physical and digital to influence purchase behaviour and amplify reach.

Experiential | Retail | Social | Sampling

# Let's Make Your Brand Unmissable.

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*Let's  
talk*



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