

# Inspire Source

# what is inspiration?

In a personal context, that's an easy question to answer. Inspiration is the feeling that new possibilities are in front of us and that we can make a change or do something exciting and personally meaningful.

# what is inspiration in a brand context?

Inspire is a global research initiative that uncovers a never-before-identified connection between brand growth and human inspiration.

The foundation of Inspire is a rigorous, multidimensional research methodology that includes qualitative and quantitative research across four continents and sophisticated data analytics. Based on over 20,000 interviews, we've identified the qualities a brand must embody, the narratives it should weave and the experiences it can design to spark people's inspiration.

The platform launched in 2020 with the "Inspiring Growth" study that explored what makes brands inspiring and how inspiration drives tangible brand growth, resulting in an annual list of the Top 100 Most Inspiring Brands in the World.

inspire →

It showed that inspiration is a process, one where the brand puts forward a new, positive possibility for people that they feel compelled to take advantage of. Based on research into inspiration in the field of motivational psychology, we determined that inspirational brands score highly on three factors:

**Elevating.** We feel good when we think and act in an altruistic way. Elevating brands demonstrate a positive impact on society and a caring approach to their customers. This in turn creates a sense that choosing them would help us be the sort of person we aspire to be. It's measured in our dataset by looking at scores for "cares for its customers," "socially responsible" and "helpful."

**Magnetic.** This speaks to the social power of a brand to make us feel like we are making a popular, exciting choice. We derive the Magnetic score by using the scores for "leader," "best brand," "would recommend to a friend" and "gaining in popularity."

**Motivating.** Motivating says that the brand offers something different that will help you accomplish your goals. The metrics that make up Motivating are "good value," "high performance," "simple" and "distinctive."

The study showed that a brand's Inspiration Score, based on how strong it is across those three factors, is highly predictive of its ability to drive growth in market share and command a price premium.

TOP

100

MOST INSPIRING BRANDS  
IN THE WORLD

Google



SAMSUNG

amazon

Colgate



Dove

YouTube



VISA

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L'ORÉAL PARIS

facebook

NETFLIX

IKEA

SONY



Ford



PayPal

Microsoft

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LinkedIn

Uber

Oral-B



TESLA

PHILIPS



Coca-Cola



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NESCAFÉ

Instagram

Canon



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DANONE

DHL



Heineken

HONDA



Walmart

Spotify

NESPRESSO

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KIA



KFC



Nintendo



BOSCH

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Emirates

Whirlpool

VOLVO



NOKIA



Lipton



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SMIRNOFF

HUAWEI



Panasonic



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SENSODYNE



JACK DANIEL'S

BACARDÍ



Kellogg's

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HEINZ

ABSOLUT



GOODYEAR



TikTok

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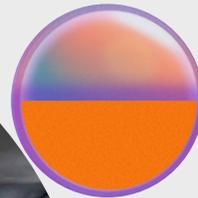
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Three years into Inspire, we are learning that a brand's inspiration status – and so propensity to grow – is highly dynamic. This isn't just down to a brand's behaviors and therefore its ability to Inspire; we suspect it has a lot to do with the unprecedented times in which people live. As the focus of people's lives changes (for instance as we come out of COVID into a new set of economic changes), so may the things that inspire people. Some brands will benefit from these shifts in the zeitgeist; others will need to change course as consumers' focus changes in order to stay in the inspiration spotlight.



The brands at the very top of the list are powerful inspiration engines with the ability to place themselves at the center of people's lives and stay there – the world may change but it changes around them. So, there is little movement at the very top, with Google, Apple, Samsung and Amazon remaining the world's most inspiring brands.

But beneath these are some pretty seismic shifts: 30% of the 2022 Top 100 brands were not in the Top 100 last year.

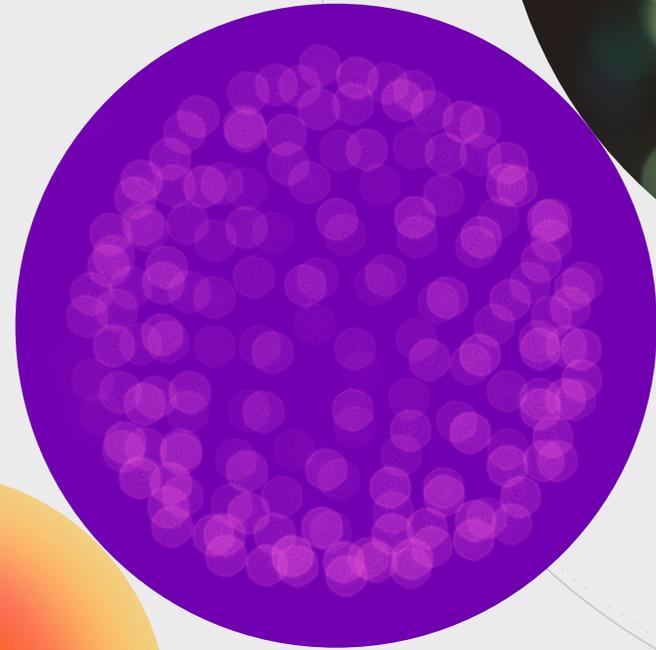
This reminds us that there is everything to play for when it comes to inspiration – these are metrics that brands can impact, thereby moving the needle on growth.

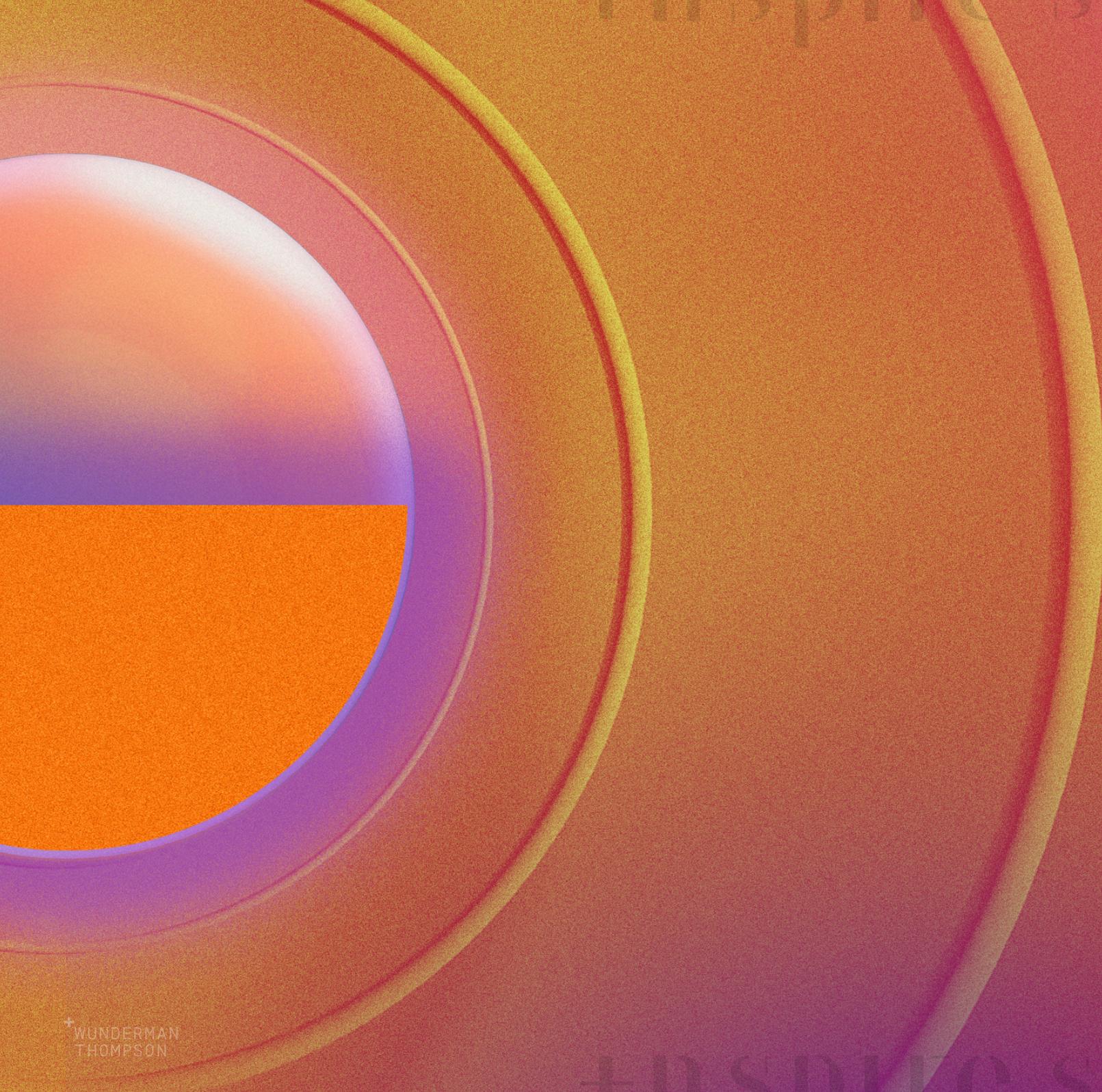
As the world has opened up again post-COVID, we've seen strong gains for mobility brands, such as Tesla and Uber, which has in turn been good for a lot of the auto brands, including the more established ones.

**Social media brands** have seen strong gains, showing their role in animating people's lives and social interactions (physical as well as virtual) as life opens up. Despite persistent negative headlines, the inspiring power of brands like Instagram and WhatsApp continues to grow. TikTok makes the Top 100 for the first time this year. Twitter is the outlier here – perhaps a victim of its reputation for controversy (it's in many ways the least “social” of social media, and subject to the “Elon effect”).

**Streaming brands continue to inspire** – Netflix is once again a strong riser and is now in the Top 20, and Disney+ is a new entrant in the Top 100. In fact, it is the strongest brand in the Disney portfolio, even out-inspiring the master brand. It will be interesting to see how much their ability to deliver much-needed inspiration in difficult times provides insulation against strong economic pressures on discretionary spending.

**Impulse brands** have done well, perhaps because life is becoming a bit more spontaneous again after lockdown restrictions – beer, spirits and treats have all risen. In contrast, certain “close to home” categories that did well during COVID are now less inspiring: personal care, beauty, coffee shops and CPG food brands have lower inspiration momentum than they did.





## more inspiration

In line with our mission to inspire growth for ambitious brands, Wunderman Thompson has developed a series of robust frameworks and methodologies designed to help brands become more inspirational, move up the Inspire Top 100 rankings, better connect with consumers and ultimately drive tangible growth.

# about inspire

Inspire is a proprietary global platform that explores what makes brands inspiring and what inspires consumers, making Wunderman Thompson the world's leading researcher into inspiration.

The foundation of Inspire is a rigorous, multidimensional research methodology, including qualitative and quantitative research across four continents, and sophisticated data analytics that identifies the qualities a brand must embody, the narratives it should weave, and the experiences it can design in order to spark people's inspiration.

Inspire has two core components:

**Inspire Score:** a brand diagnostic tool that identifies the brand attributes that fuel growth through their power to inspire people, culminating in an annual list of the Top 100 Most Inspiring Brands in the World. Validated by consumer analysis and powered by WPP's Brand Asset Valuator (BAV) database which contains more than 340,000 brand perception studies covering 57,000 brands worldwide, from over 2,700 categories across 25 industries and 50 markets, over 29 years.

The 2021-22 data is made up of over 85,000 studies of 19,000 brands in 722 categories and 26 markets.

**Inspire InFocus:** the world's largest social study on inspiration that maps the psychological link between people's deep rooted, often subconscious values systems and their inspiration preferences, enabling us to predict how humanity will be inspired. Inspire InFocus feeds our proprietary syndicated motivational segmentation, which enables brands to apply these powerful insights to target audiences and strengthen their marketing strategies.

# about us

At Wunderman Thompson we exist to inspire growth for ambitious brands. Part creative agency, part consultancy and part technology company, our experts provide end-to-end capabilities at a global scale to deliver inspiration across the entire brand and customer experience.

We are 20,000 strong in 90 markets around the world, where our people bring together creative storytelling, diverse perspectives, inclusive thinking, and highly specialized vertical capabilities, to drive growth for our clients. We offer deep expertise across the entire customer journey, including communications, commerce, consultancy, CRM, CX, data, production, and technology.

Wunderman Thompson is a WPP agency (NYSE: WPP).

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