

A photograph of two Black women laughing heartily. The woman on the left has short, curly hair and is wearing a white cable-knit sweater. The woman on the right has long, curly hair and is wearing a red and black plaid shirt. They are standing in front of a white wall with horizontal shiplap planks. The image is dimmed to serve as a background for the text.

**BuzzFeed**

presents

# BRITISH BLACK CULTURE

*Diversity and Representation in Advertising*

# METHODOLOGY

BuzzFeed News conducted this Black British culture study online via Pollfish between Sept 2019 - Oct 2019.

Results are based on 500 U.K. Black respondents aged 16-54 who consume news, lifestyle, or entertainment content online at least monthly.

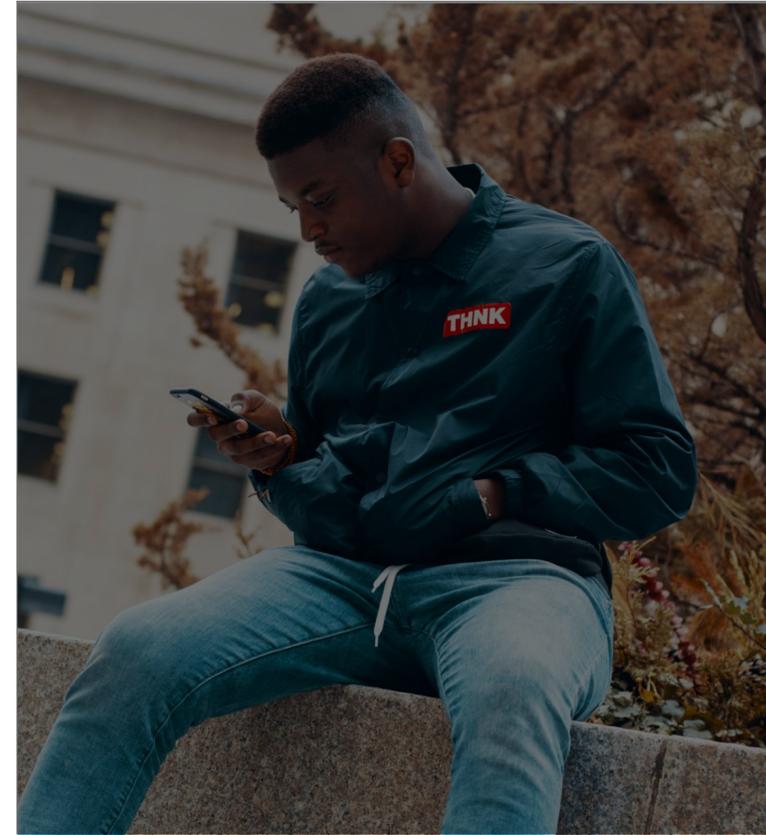


*For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size has an estimated margin of error (which measures sampling variability) of +/- 4.4%.*

How minority groups are visually represented in culture is a topic that has become increasingly prevalent.



Beauty standards, stereotypes and discrimination affect them the most.



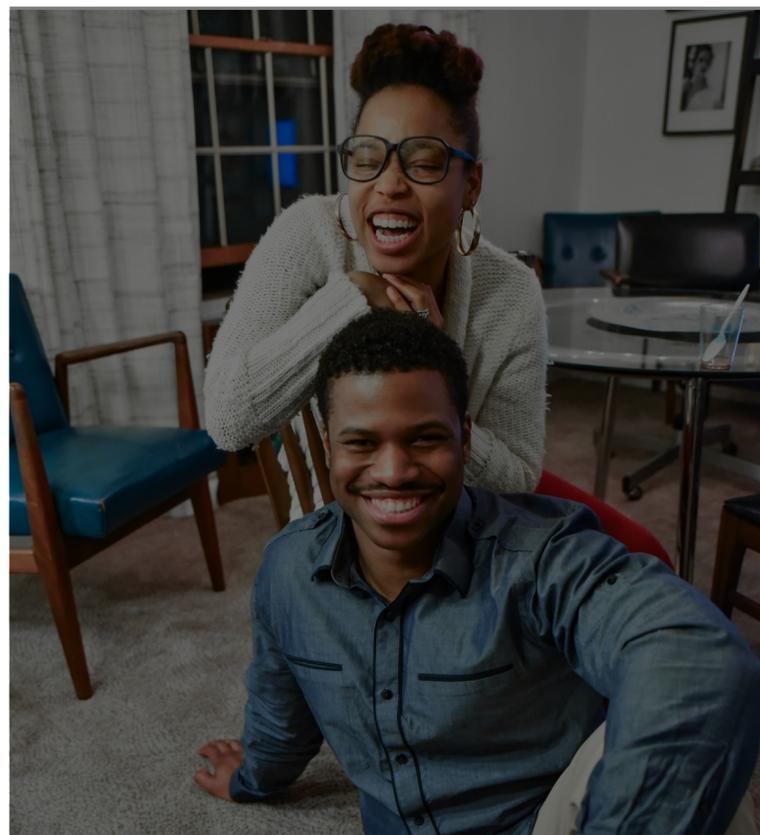
63%

have personally been affected by negative racial stereotypes or prejudices held by others.



The standards our society has set around beauty are unfair and out of date.

63%



61%

feel their race is underrepresented within digital content.



# This is a debate worth having.

The buzz around it isn't going to quieten down any time soon.

38% of Black British, 16 - 54 year olds, do not feel that media outlets personally represent them today.

The strongest reasons for this feeling stem from the idea that content and coverage is based on stereotypes, is biased, misinformed, and lacks depth.





# Using digital and social to grow and connect.

Always striving for better, their reasons for consuming digital content stem from a desire to stay informed, discover content surrounding their passions and teach themselves new skills.

With a desire to connect, they are turning to digital sources to find their tribes. By exposing themselves to different cultures, ideas and perspectives as well as connecting with people with similar passions and interests.

**72%**  
consume digital  
content on a daily  
basis

# Set back by stereotypes.

A quarter of Black Brits don't feel represented by media outlets today saying their content is outright offensive and lacks authenticity.

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*"There's not enough input from my culture from all different backgrounds. A lot of stereotypes and negativity towards my race which allows or even encourages discrimination to be ok."*



Based on stereotypes  
49%

Biased  
42%

Misinformed  
40%

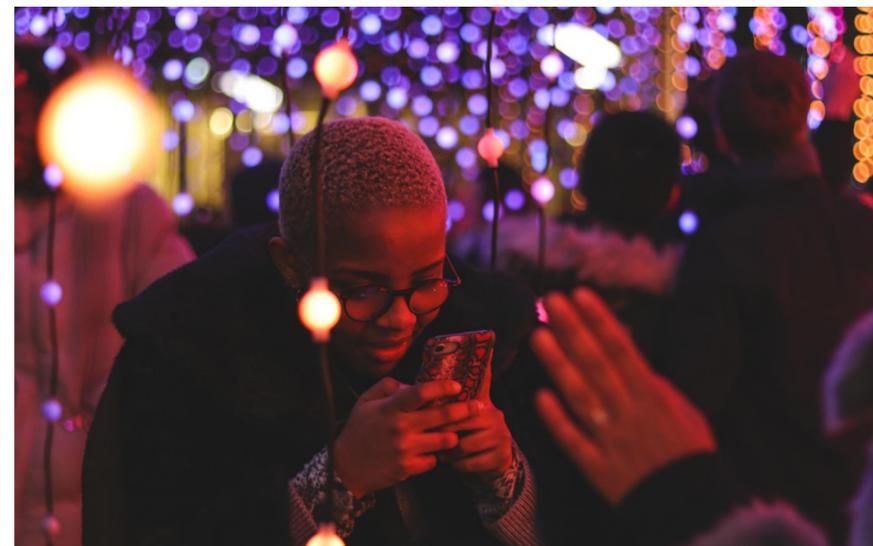
Lacks depth  
34%

Uninspired and repetitive  
31%

# 58%

feel their race is often ignored by mainstream brands today.

Over a quarter of this same audience feel that the brands they purchase, or see advertisements from, do not personally represent them.

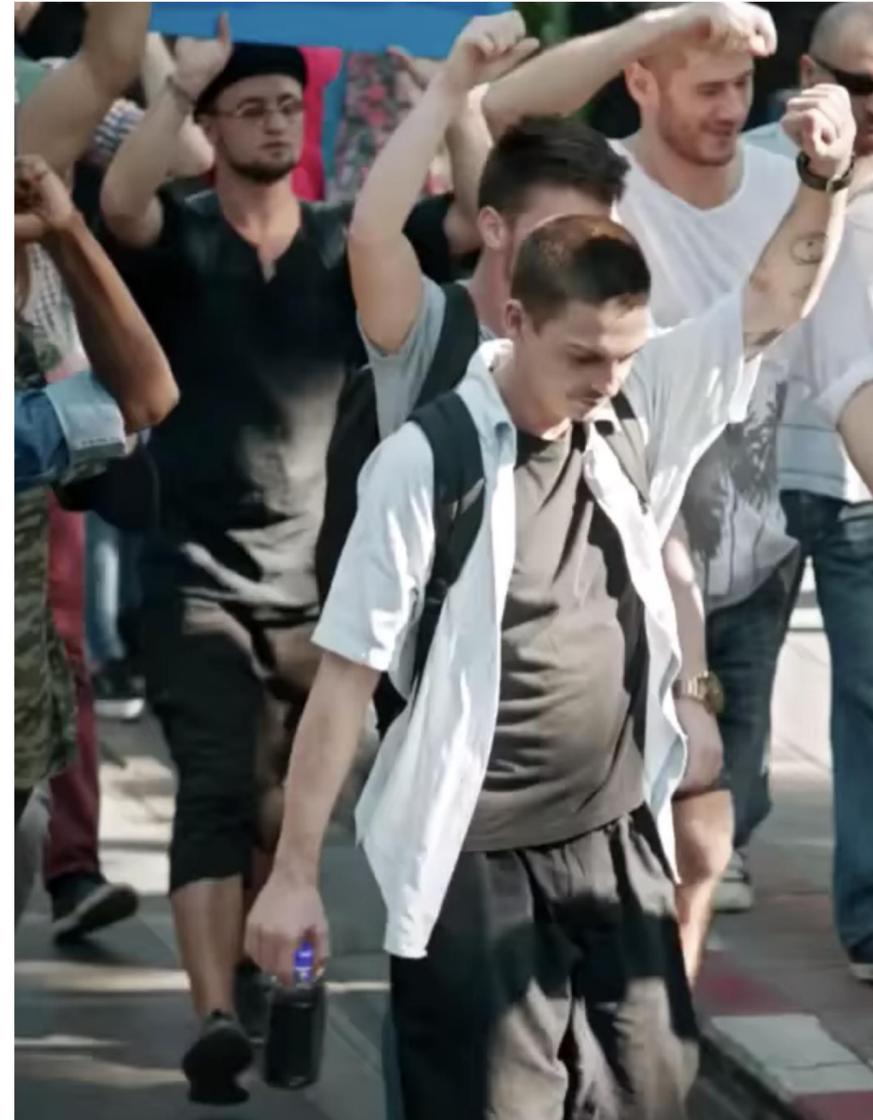
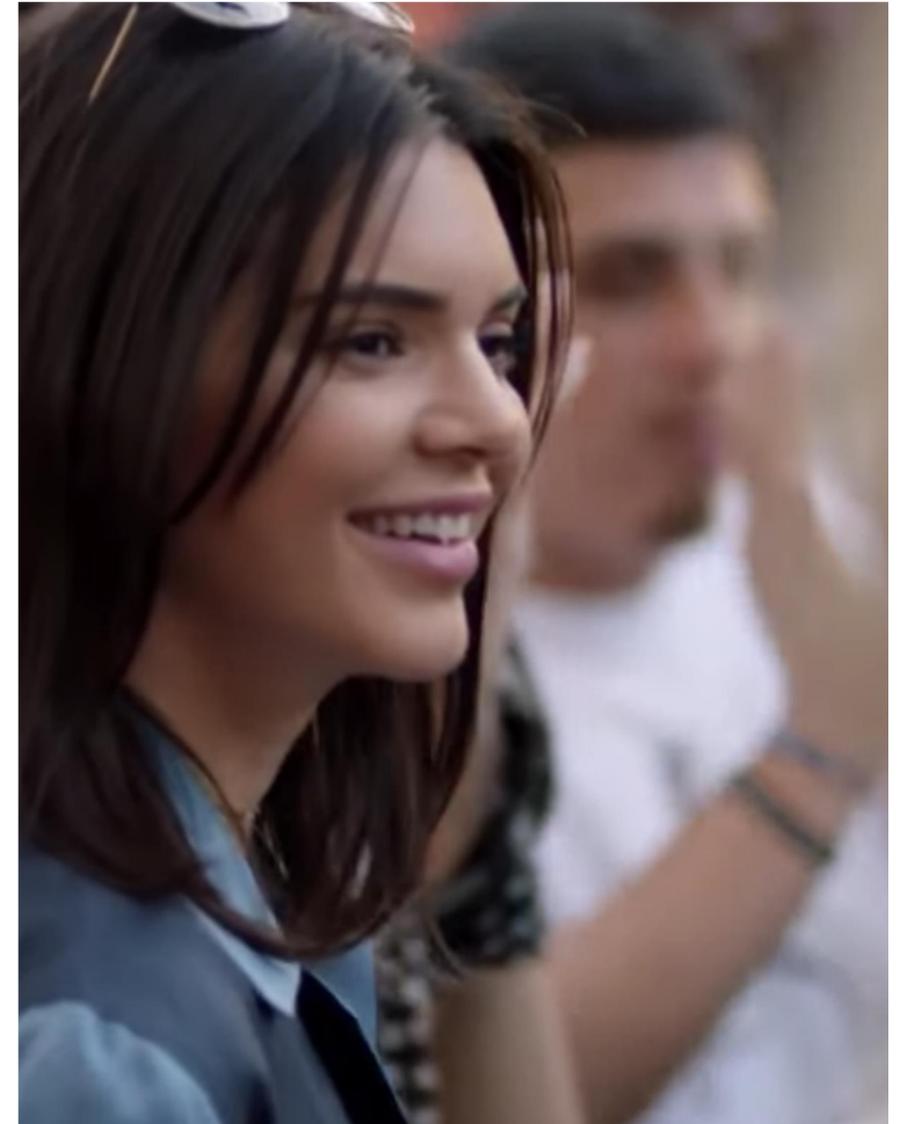


There is still work to be done.

Brands simply do not always understand the real issues enough to perceive them in an unbiased way.

So what's the

fix....



1. Understand your audience is multifaceted

2. Learn from what's going right

3. Use your voice

4. Listen to your audience

5. Aim higher



# 1. IDENTITY IS MULTIFACETED.

It's important to understand that identity is bigger than one characteristic and the colour of one's skin doesn't wholly define a person.

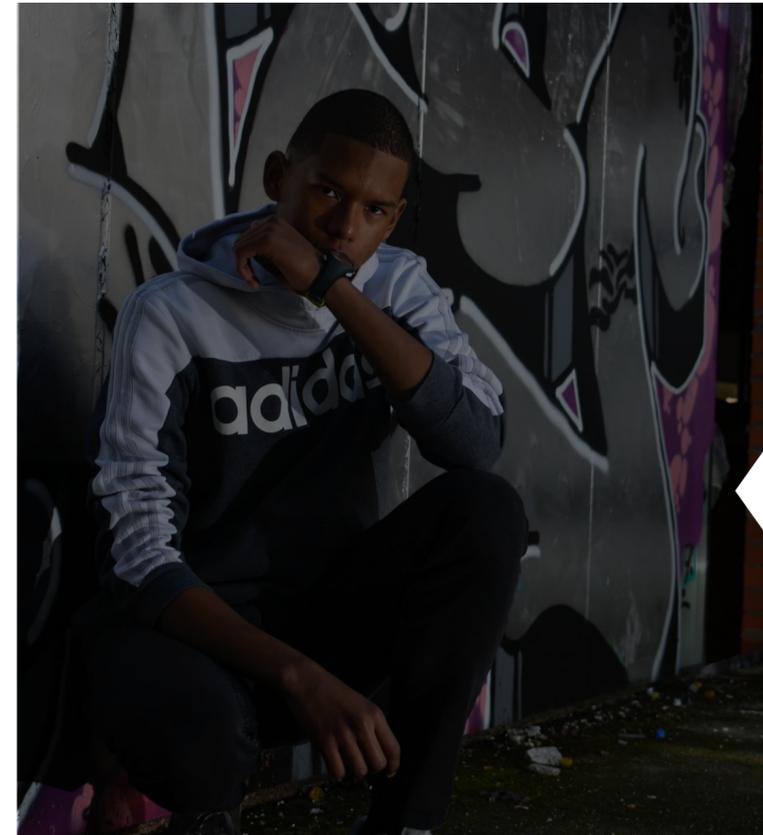


We understand intellectually that this is true,  
yet race is often used as the defining  
characteristic. Which leads to stereotypical  
messaging that doesn't resonate.



# 74%

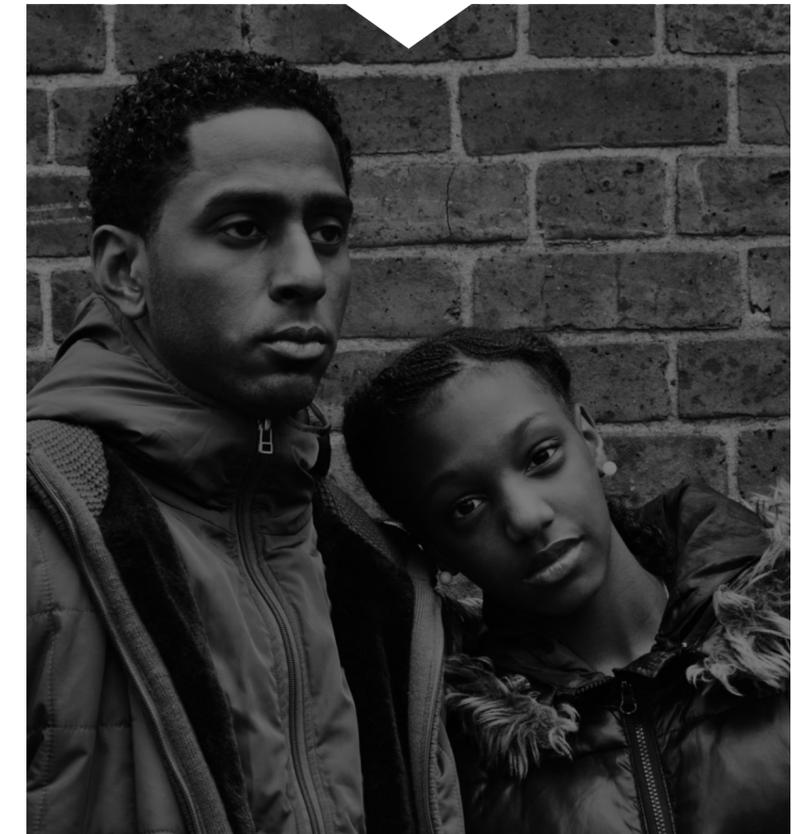
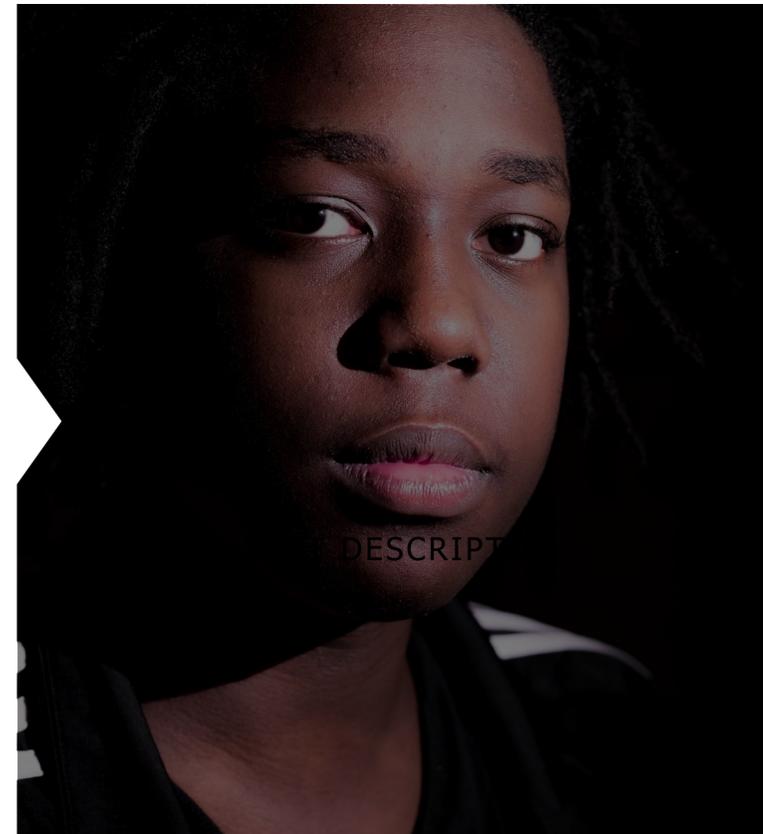
AGREE THAT THEIR RACE HAS IMPACTED THEIR PERSONAL IDENTITY.



"It has allowed me to see beautiful things in my life through music and traditions but negative things due to the treatment my people get from others, which has impacted me in the way I carry myself and behave in certain situations."



"As a black female I feel as though I have to try harder for my voice to be heard without being perceived as an angry black woman. There's times where I can match somebody else's volume yet I am singled out for shouting or being aggressive."





# Collage of identities

They align with personality statements that speak to the importance of their racial and cultural heritage in addition to anything that helps them grow as an individual.

48% say they are proud of their racial identity and cultural heritage

44% say they feel it's important to be well informed about the world around them

34% say experiences mean more to them than material things

The issues that matter the most to them range from human rights to both world and local issues.

**64%**  
don't feel there are enough digital media sources covering these issues sufficiently or in a trustworthy manner.



Racism and/or racial profiling  
81%

Mental health  
80%

Environmental issues  
80%

Youth violence  
75%

Gender equality  
70%

## 2. LEARN FROM THE GOOD.

Favourite publishers are those who remain unbiased, accurate, trustworthy and authentic.



# Content must be relevant, relatable and reliable.

Topics and opinions must stay balanced and genuine.

*I like "Gal-Dem because they produce content that is relevant to me as a black woman and I trust a lot of their analysis to take into account perspectives that are normally ignored by mainstream news."*



### 3. USE YOUR VOICE.

Brands must find balance with using their voice, influence and reach for good.

Don't act like the expert, but don't stay silent.





# 77%

say brands must have a louder voice, using their reach to play a larger role in social issues today.

Black Brit's feel brands have a responsibility to promote inclusiveness. They must make it so people see themselves represented in media today. They feel it not only gives hope but permission to be yourself.



Brands can't exist in a vacuum, they have to talk about things within a social context and they have a responsibility to educate their audiences on real world issues.



### 3. ASK, THEN LISTEN.

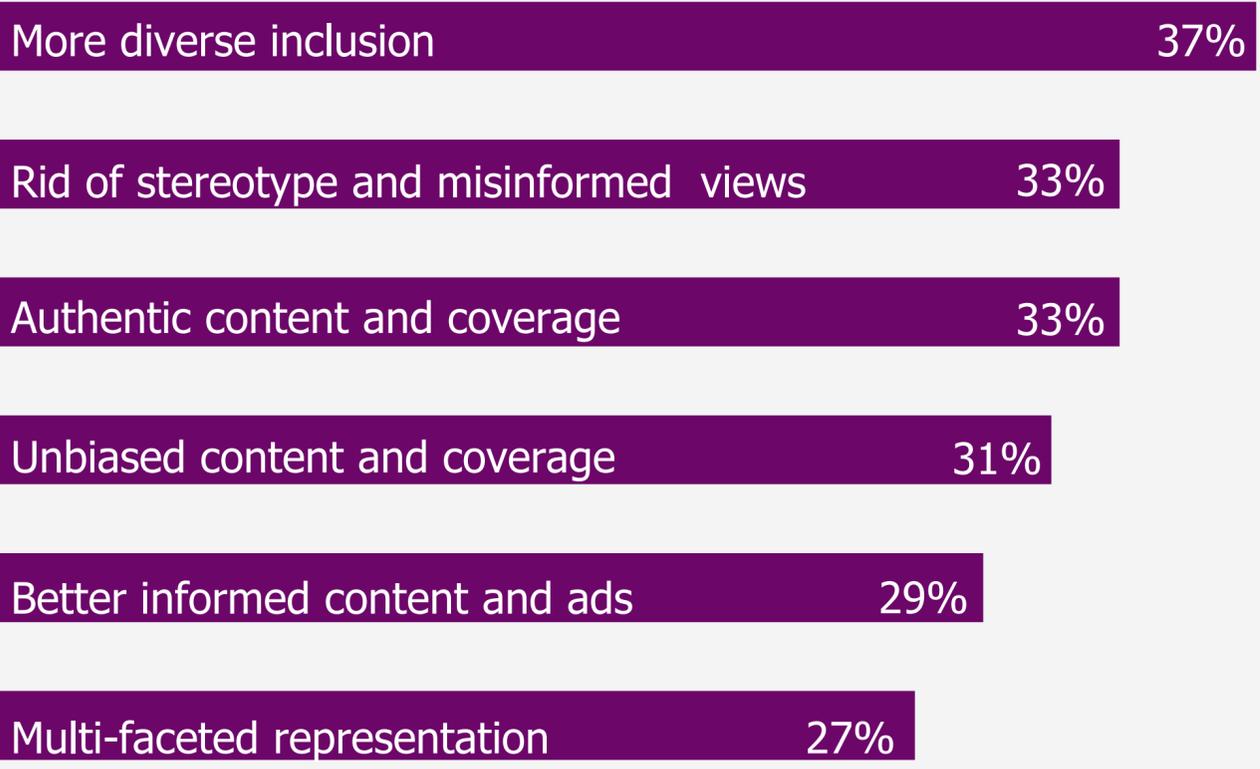
Staying in touch with consumers key concerns and most personal thoughts is vital in staying authentic and relatable.





# FUTURE OF MEDIA

Authentic, unbiased, inclusive content and coverage free from stereotypes and misinformed perspectives.



Source: BuzzFeed News Black British Culture Study, Polfish October 2019 (n-500)

## 5. AIM HIGHER.

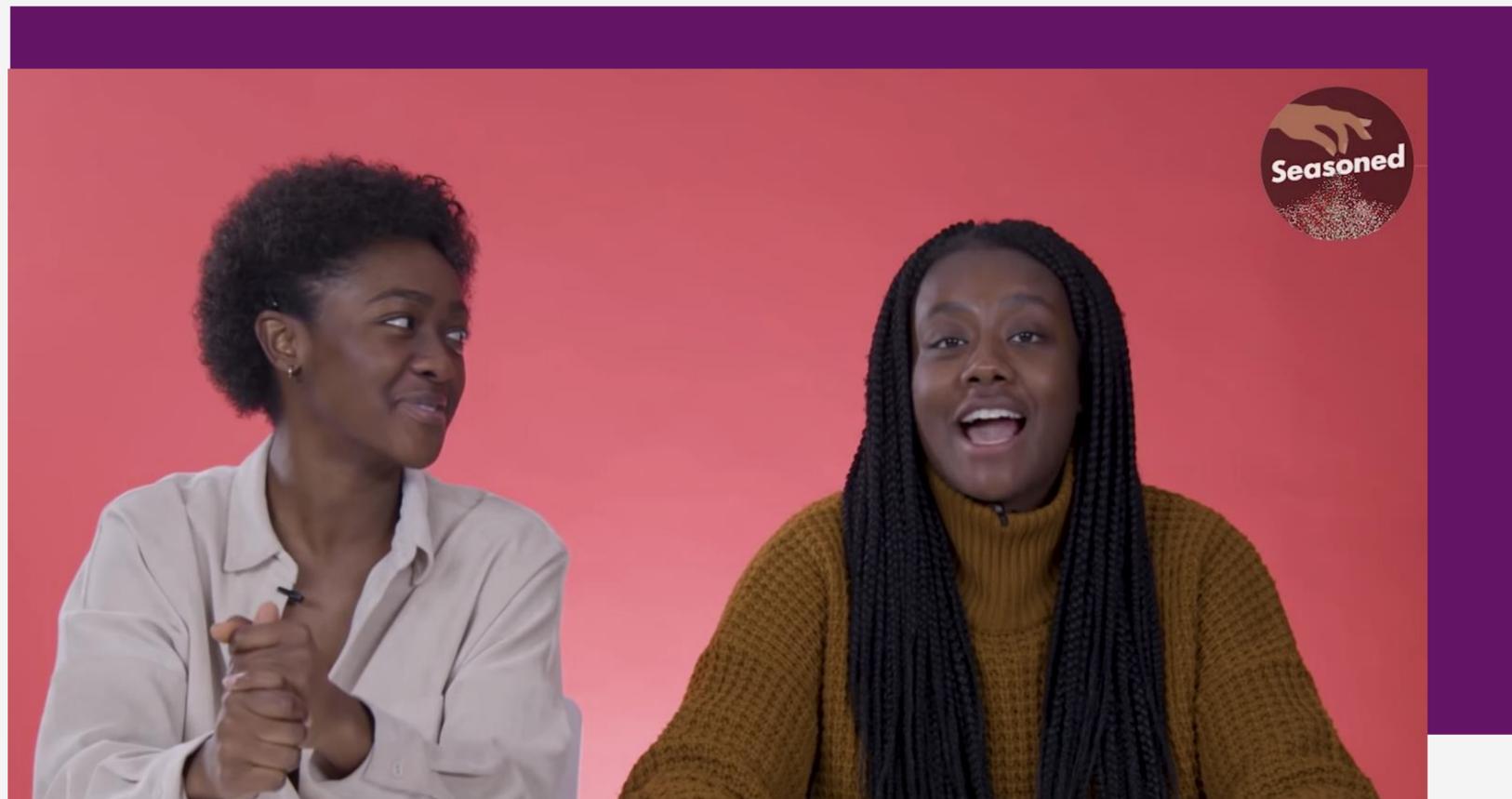
Aim for inclusivity on all fronts...from vendors to your in-house talent.

Lean on your internal talent as your North



star.

# More than marketing strategy, make it your DNA.



1. Find vendors that represent your whole audience.
  2. Strive for a diverse roster of editors and creators that stands as a powerful voice for the Black British community.
- Empower and give your internal talent space to create content that connects.



# 6. APPLY IT.

BuzzFeed's Mantra :

We know this audience because we  
are this audience.





It is our ambition at BuzzFeed through our brand Seasoned to lead the way on how black stories are told, and how black consumers can be most effectively engaged.



We want to do this in a way that makes them feel part of a brand, as opposed to a tool for the brand.



WHAT IS SEASONED?

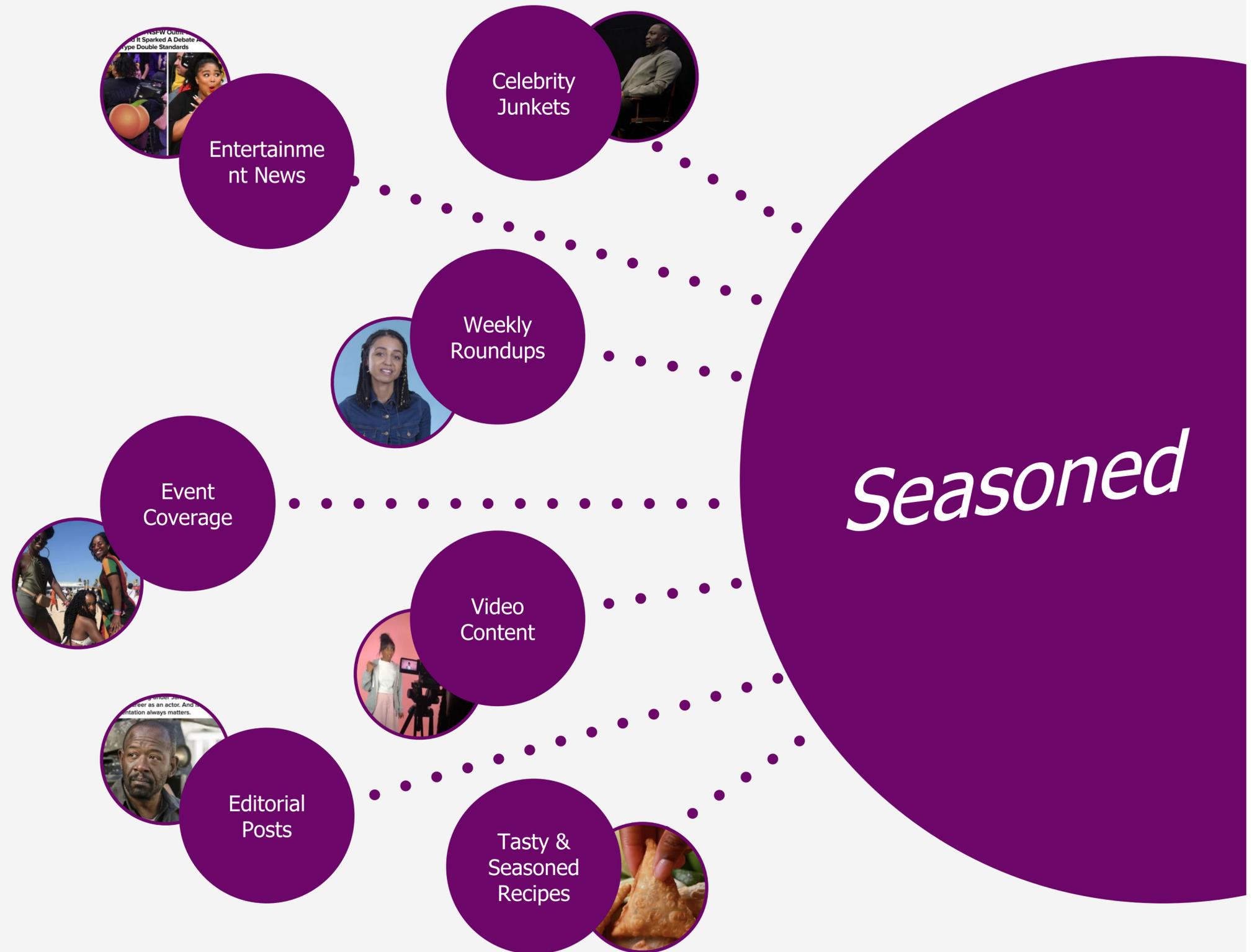
# Seasoned speaks to the black British Experience.

It started as a passion project.

The brand exists as an extension of the BuzzFeed brand, a manifestation of the various backgrounds and positions of the black staff within the UK organisation.



# What Do We Cover?



# QUESTIONS, NOT ANSWERS

1. Are you looking at the whole person?

2. Are you taking cues from success?

3. Are you using your voice and influence?

4. Are you really listening?

5. Are you striving for better?

