

Brands maintain support for Pride despite anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment

Article

The news: Corporate support for Pride Month events has been solid this year despite some highly visible strong opposition to pro-LGBTQ+ marketing strategies.

- Nearly 78% of US Pride organizers surveyed this year by InterPride, a worldwide network of Pride events, said their corporate sponsorships either rose or held steady since last year, while

22% reported declines, per [NBC News](#).

- Retailer [Kohl's](#) announced a Pride merchandise selection that includes tops, throws, and more items, and said it was again **donating \$100,000** to the Trevor Project, which advises LGBTQ+ youth.
- **Delta Air Lines** kicked off the month by unveiling its first-ever [Pride exhibit](#) at its Flight Museum in Atlanta.
- **Levi's** unveiled its lavender [2023 Pride collection](#) featuring non-binary clothing with empowering motifs, and announced an annual **\$100,000** donation to Outright International for LGBTQ+ rights.

LGBTQ+ community targeted: During a year that has seen diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives come [under general assault](#), anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment also picked up. The Human Rights Campaign advocacy group declared a [state of emergency](#) for US LGBTQ+ people this month, citing more than 75 anti-LGBTQ+ bills that were signed into law in 2023.

Hard hits: Many companies that showed support for the LGBTQ+ community were attacked, but perhaps none fared as badly this year as [Bud Light](#), which learned the hard way that backtracking on important social issues doesn't inspire consumer confidence.

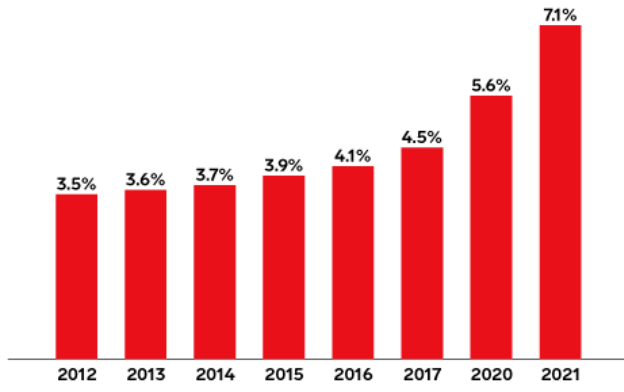
- The company's sales fell sharply when it irked conservative-leaning consumers who decried its partnership with transgender influencer **Dylan Mulvaney** as well as progressives who felt the beer maker didn't offer enough support in the face of that backlash.
- **Adidas** faced social media opposition for its Pride 2023 swimwear collection, where a seemingly male model advertised a [one-piece bathing suit](#), prompting critics to suggest the brand should have labeled it as unisex or marketed it as a LGBTQ+ offering.

Our take: As the LGBTQ+ community grows—especially among the critical [Gen Z cohort](#)—so does its purchasing power. Based on 2021 Census data, the LGBTQ+ community has **\$1.4 trillion** in spending power, per a 2022 report from The Pride Co-op, a market research firm. Despite rising anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment, brands can ill afford to ignore this vital constituency.

- Brands that engage in pride marketing need to stand by it, lest they experience Bud Light's fate and lose consumers on both sides of the issue.

US LGBT Adults, 2012-2021

% of population



Note: LGBT identification was not measured in 2018 or 2019

Source: Gallup as cited in company blog, Feb 17, 2022

279342

eMarketer | InsiderIntelligence.com

Go further: Check out our [Data Drop: 4 Charts on the LGBTQ+ Consumer.](#)