

# Redefining Canadian: Authentic Diversity in CPG Advertising:

March 4, 2026



# What you will see today

1. The Tension
2. The Opportunity
3. Proposed Strategic Framework
  - a. The Execution
  - b. Measurement
4. How Brands are Impacted



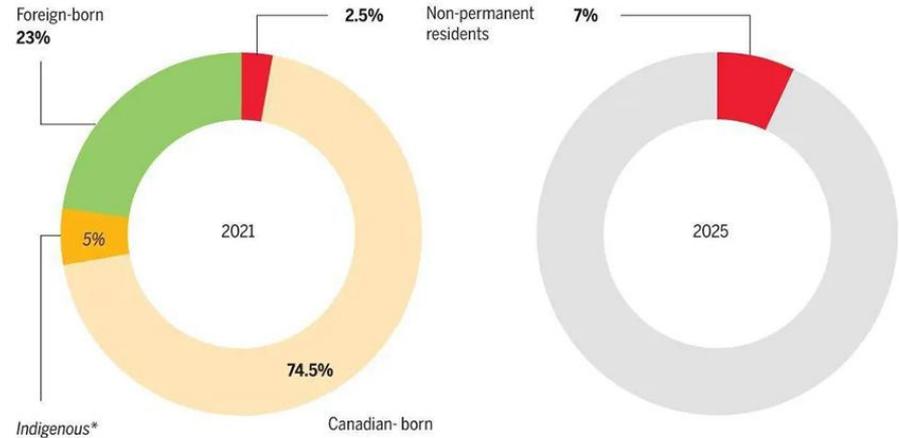
**Diversity in advertising struggles between genuine inclusion and “safe” tokenistic commercial pressures.**

# Brands are missing out on communicating meaningfully to half of the population

By 2041:

- Half of the Canadian population will be immigrants and their Canadian-born children.
- 4 out of 5 Torontonians will be foreign-born or born to immigrant parents.

## WHO IS CANADA NOW?



\*Indigenous people are included in the Canadian-born population. They are shown separately here to highlight Indigenous identity

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

BRICE HALL / NATIONAL POST

Source: Statistics Canada's Center for Demography 2041 Projections. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220908/dq220908a-eng.htm>

# Canada Has Changed. CPG Marketing Hasn't.

## Reality

- Canada is one of the most diverse countries in the world
- 1 in 4 Canadians are immigrants
- Gen Z is the most diverse generation ever

## Disparity

Advertising in CPG continues to stick to the tropes :

- Traditional families
- Eurocentric beauty standards
- Cultural tokenism
- Western food norms
- Higher socioeconomic lifestyles

CPG doesn't reflect Canada — it reflects nostalgia.

# Multidimensional Problem within a Multicultural Nation

## Dimensions of Diversity & Intersectionality Framework



**There is a lack of corporate commitment  
and clear need for a guiding framework to inform diverse  
representation**

# Tropes we're seeing in CPG



Traditional visual symbols and lack of diversity in sports



Socially acceptable beauty standards



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Primarily Caucasian families with high socioeconomic status



**Inclusion Isn't Representation. It's Recognition.**

People don't want to just see themselves in advertising.  
They want to feel seen and understood.

## **Diagnosis:**

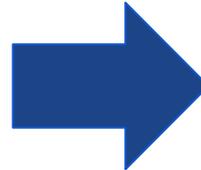
**Brands are playing it safe.  
They don't want to get it “wrong” and face public backlash**

# A clear framework to help guide brands is needed for the updated Canadian Identity

FROM

TO

1. **Representation** Tropes, one-dimensional
2. **Relevance** Limited cultural integration
3. **Reach** Mass media
4. **Resonance** Limited trust & loyalty

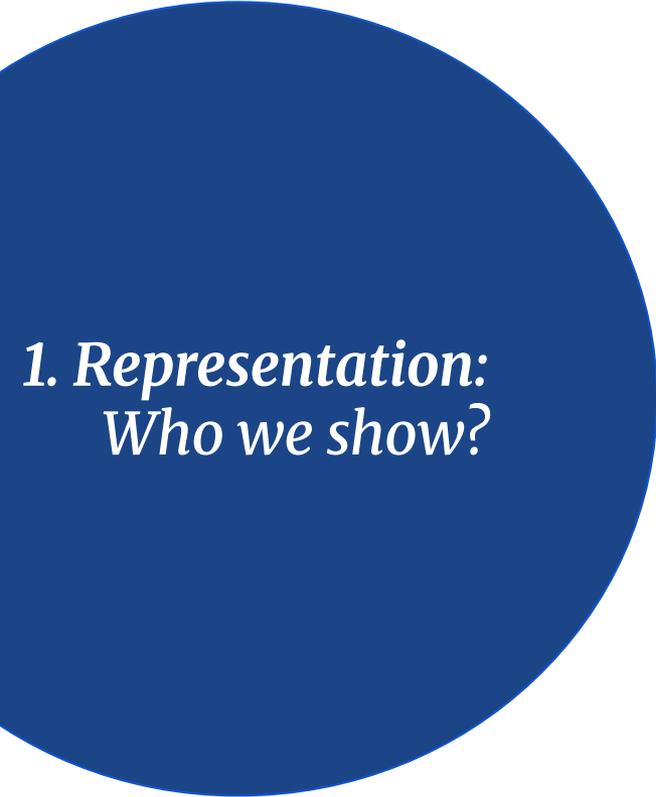


- Multi-dimensional
- Connect to real behaviours, interests, affinities
- Precision inclusion (media channel diversity)
- Community advocacy

# Introducing The Inclusion Index



# The Inclusion Index - Representation



## *1. Representation: Who we show?*

### **Measures:**

Cultural diversity, Family structures, Body types, Gender expression, Ability representation, Age diversity

### **Key principle:**

Visibility without authenticity = tokenism

# The Inclusion Index - **Relevance**

*2. Relevance:  
How we show up?*

## **Measures:**

Cultural consumption habits, Food rituals / routines, Beauty norms, Household realities, Economic diversity, Regional nuances

## **Key principle:**

Inclusion fails when brands assume one lifestyle fits all.

# The Inclusion Index – Reach



*3. Reach:  
Who are we  
actually reaching?*

## **Measures:**

Media channel diversity, Community media investment, Multilingual media presence, Cultural platform penetration, Algorithm bias mitigation, Geographic equity

## **Key principle:**

You cannot claim inclusion if your media plan excludes communities.

# The Inclusion Index - Resonance

*4. Resonance:  
How people  
respond?*

## **Measures:**

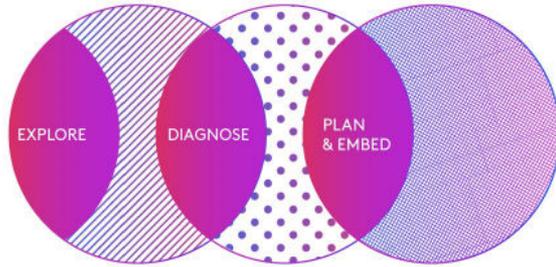
Trust, Cultural sentiment, Engagement depth, Brand affinity, Community advocacy, Incremental reach among underrepresented groups

## **Key principle:**

Inclusion works when people feel understood — not targeted.

# Consider real and effective measurement

Measurement can keep brands accountable and evolving, ensuring they are reflecting Canadians and Canadian values, and helping brand growth.



Kantar Brand Inclusion Index



Ipsos DEI Metric

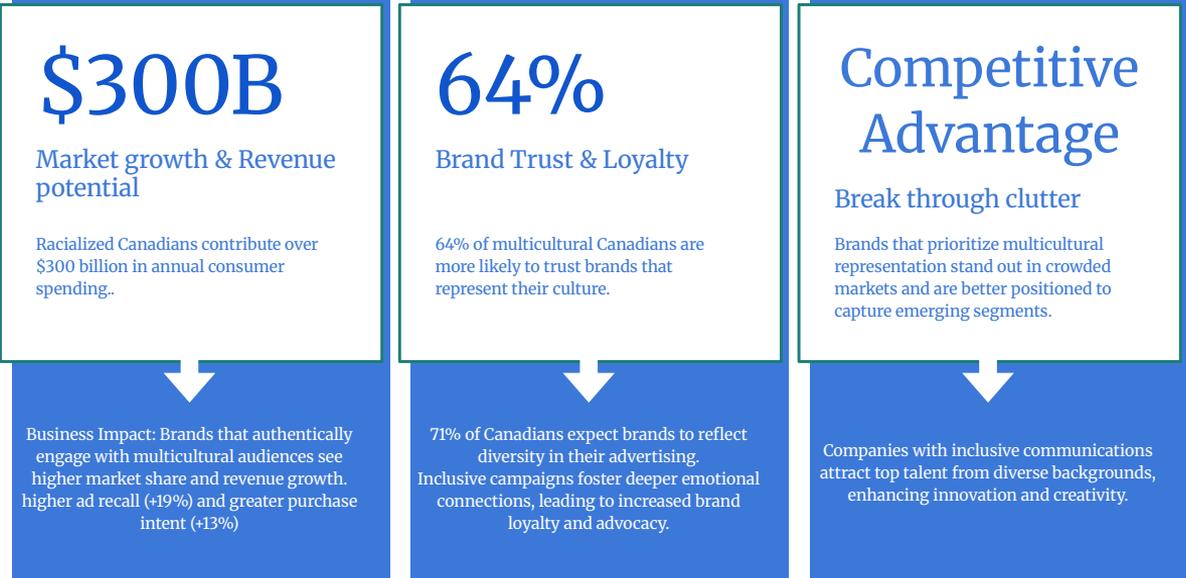
# The Inclusion Score Model

Shift from Performance Inclusion to Operational Inclusion.

Project	Representation (25)	Relevance (25)	Reach (25)	Resonance (25)	Total (/100)
Campaign 1	18	12	9	15	54
Campaign 2	20	15	10	15	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>30</b>	

Each pillar scored out of 25. Total score = 100.

# Embracing diverse representation in advertising is not just a social imperative—it's a business driver



## **A clear guiding framework for diversity and inclusion advertising will set up Canadian brands for success**

- Brands have been playing it “safe” and lack guidance and commitment
- The Inclusion Index (Representation, Relevance, Reach, Resonance) will empower brands to re-imagine their advertising strategy
- Ultimately, embracing diverse representation in advertising is not just a social imperative—it’s a growth driver for driving value, securing brand loyalty, and advocacy

**Thank you**