

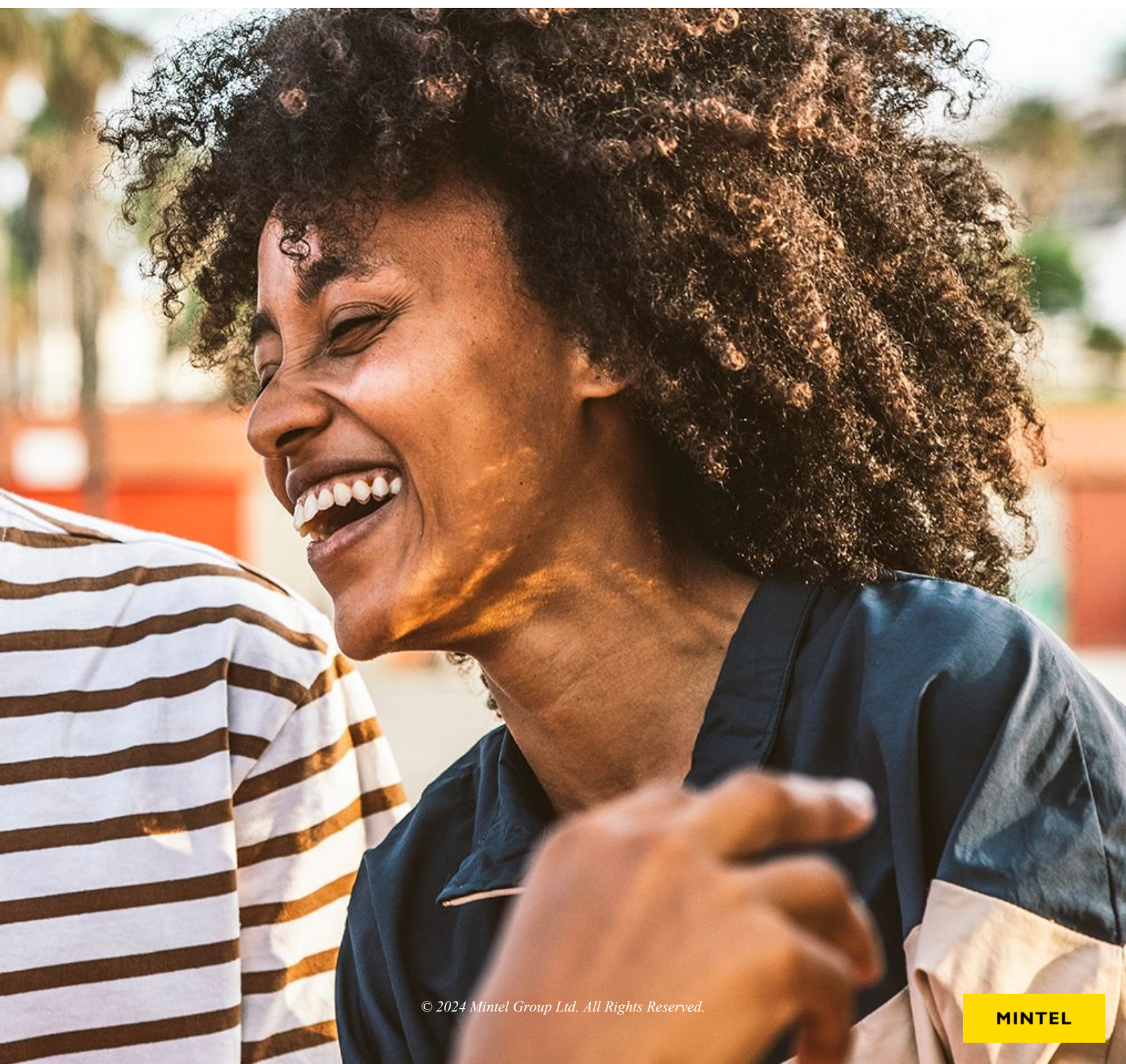
# BLACK AMERICANS AND SYMBOLS OF IDENTITY – US – 2024



Black American identity is layered and shaped by diverse experiences. Brands are a key part of the narrative around identity as they reflect images to the masses.



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# Black Americans And Symbols Of Identity - US - 2024

## This report looks at the following areas:

- Significance of culture and heritage to Black consumers
- Outlook, evolution, perspectives and expressions of identity
- Importance of language and social circles to Black Americans' identity
- Role of Black senior adults in cultivating identity for Black Americans
- How Black consumers expect brands to support them

## Overview

Black Americans' symbols of identity are deeply rooted in their rich culture and heritage, forming the backdrop of their sense of self. However, it's the interplay of life experiences that adds nuanced layers to their identity. This complexity allows room for exploration of diverse skills and interests, leading to engagement with varied social circles. Central to their identity is the recognition of the importance of media and brand representation. They understand its profound influence on societal perceptions, making it a vital component of their personal identity.



Black American identity is layered and shaped by diverse experiences. Brands are a key part of the narrative around identity as they reflect images to the masses.

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## Report Content



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- What you need to know
- Consumer trends: key takeaways
- Market predictions
- Opportunities

### TARGET AUDIENCE OVERVIEW

#### Black consumers by the numbers

- Black American youth have greater representation and influence on societal trends
  - Graph 1: distribution of US generations, by race, 2023
- Black Americans' cultural identity within higher education may be challenged due to less representation
  - Graph 2: high school/college graduation rate, by race/Hispanic origin, 2021
- Black adults' household income has been steadily increasing
  - Graph 3: median household income % annual change, by Black and by total, 2012-22
- Black adults' household income has been steadily increasing (dollars)

#### Market context & drivers

- Brands can connect with multicultural consumers by appealing to individuality and unique self-expression
  - Graph 4: self-expressive and use outward appearance, by race and Hispanic origin, 2023
  - Graph 5: self-expressive and use outward appearance, by parental status, LGBTQ+ identity, area of residence, 2023
- Diverse culture and heritage impact the identity of Black Americans
- Black Americans have a rich history of faith and religion
- Affluence drives Black Americans' desire to connect with their culture; greater demand for Black culture in the mainstream
- Growing multiculturalism impacts how Black Americans relate to their heritage and culture

### CONSUMER INSIGHTS

#### Consumer fast facts

#### Significance of culture and heritage

- Culture and heritage is an essential part of Black Americans' identity
- Parenthood gives Black consumers new identity and less concern for culture and heritage
  - Graph 6: importance of culture and heritage, by parental status and women/moms, 2024
- Women have a greater responsibility to cultivate their families and pass down culture/heritage



# Black Americans and Symbols of Identity – US – 2024

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- Graph 7: importance of culture and heritage – participating in activities that are part of my culture/heritage is important to me, by gender and parental status, 2024
- Culture in an essential part of identity for older Black adults; individual pursuits help form younger generations' identity
  - Graph 8: importance of culture and heritage, by generation, 2024
- A focus on Black culture helps higher-earning Black adults stay connected
  - Graph 9: importance of culture and heritage, by household income, 2024
- Black consumers whose political views impact their interpretation of culture/heritage are more engaged in their culture
- Impact of political views on translation of culture/heritage peaks among Millennials
  - Graph 10: activities related to culture/heritage, by political views impact interpretation of culture/heritage, 2024
  - Graph 11: importance of culture and heritage – my political views have impact on how I interpret my culture/heritage, 2024
- Greek letter organizations become more relevant as Black consumers matriculate in their education
  - Graph 12: activities related to culture/heritage, by education level, 2024
- Brand spotlight: Macy's Kasper Sorority Collection highlights Black sororities
- Empower Black Americans to bring culture to new activities and situations

## Perspectives of identity

- Black consumers are confident in who they are and feel most like themselves when they can interact with others in person
- Self-confidence carries over into confidence about their knowledge of culture
  - Graph 13: knowledge of culture/heritage, 2024
- Desire to learn more about culture becomes more prevalent as household income increases

## Outlook and evolution of identity

- Black consumers have varying opinions on the idea that their identity is constantly changing and how to balance it all
  - Graph 14: attitudes toward identity – feelings about identity, 2024
- Life experiences are key to how consumers see their identity
  - Graph 15: attitudes toward identity – my sense of identity is constantly changing, by generation, 2024
  - Graph 16: attitudes toward identity – my sense of identity is constantly changing, by parental status, 2024
- Analyst POV: life experiences tell the story of true identity
- Black LGBTQ+ are more anxious about life
- Interpretations of life evolve with life stage
  - Graph 17: overall life description, by generation, 2024
- Pro-aging ads can help younger Black consumers understand life outlook and the evolution of identity
- Black consumers' relationship with identity influences their outlook on life
  - Graph 18: overall life description, by confidence in identity, 2024
- Confident Identity vs Insecure Identity

## Expressing identity

- Balancing authenticity is vital to expressing identity, consumers manage to celebrate their Black identity amidst the need for adaptation
  - Graph 19: expressing identity, 2024
- Parenthood emboldens Black adults to express themselves authentically
  - Graph 20: attitudes toward expressing identity – importance of authentic expression (any agree), by parental status, 2024
- Language plays a significant role in how Black consumers relate to others
  - Graph 21: attitudes toward perspectives on language – AAVE and colloquial language (any agree), 2024
- Awareness around the need for code-switching is more prominent among college-educated Black adults
  - Graph 22: attitudes toward expressing identity – recognize the need to adapt (any agree), by education level, 2024
- Code-switching is common but raises a debate about lack of authenticity
- Black adults have diverse social circles and value both virtual and in-person interactions
  - Graph 23: attitudes toward language – representation and social circles (any agree), 2024
- Despite some potentially negative feedback, Black consumers are enthusiastic about expressing themselves and celebrate their identity
  - Graph 24: attitudes toward expressing identity and impacts (any agree), 2024

## Media and brand responsibility

- Black consumers hold brands to a high standard and expect appropriate and respectful representation
  - Graph 25: attitudes toward representation (any agree), 2024
- Brand community involvement is especially important to families
  - Graph 26: attitudes toward brand responsibility – community involvement, by parental status, 2024
- Gen Z and Millennials are more likely to express themselves through the brands they buy
  - Graph 27: attitudes toward identity – expression through brands (any agree), by generation, 2024
- Authentic representation is an important aspect of preserving Black identity
  - Graph 28: attitudes toward representation, 2024
- Analyst POV: media plays a significant role in the portrayal of identity and Black consumers want the industry to get it right

## COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

### Marketing and advertising

- Procter & Gamble use thought-provoking images to address bias in its "Widen the Screen" campaign
- Procter & Gamble use thought provoking images to address bias

### Launch activity and innovation

- New comedy TV series 'Churchy' sheds light on Black church culture
- KevOnStage's new series 'Churchy' brings Black church culture to the mainstream

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- Beyonce's new country singles give Black adults confidence to embrace new genres
- Hasbro reboots the classic board game, 'Clue' to include characters, backstories and special abilities

## APPENDIX

- Consumer research methodology
- Generations
- Abbreviations and terms

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