

Beyond the Rainbow



It's Pride Month, a month dedicated to celebrating the LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and all other identities) community. A month of self-love, freedom to express yourself, and a month to reflect and respect those that have come before to free this community. But, it's also a month dedicated to the ongoing battle for equality, socially, legally, and in the workplace.

Overall, it is a month full of celebration and pride.

Companies around the world will choose to show their allyship, this month, by creating pride themed marketing campaigns, commenting on diversity in the workplace, and editing their logos to feature the bright colours of the rainbow. However, this effort is often misconstrued as a shallow attempt to jump on a trend, using the pride theme to sell products and services due to their support of the LGBTQIA+ community: Rainbow-Washing.

Rainbow Washing:

When companies signal support for the LGBTQ+ community, like adding rainbow colours to their marketing materials during Pride Month, without actually doing substantive work that helps members in the community. ([Built in](#))

At Ethical Investors, we understand that true support extends far deeper than surface-level symbolism. So, as we wear our rainbow with pride, we want to talk about how brands can go beyond the rainbow to help support marginalised communities and equality.

True support:

A number of companies have altered their logos for Pride month, but often receive backlash for doing so, with people claiming it is a superficial attempt to show support. However, there are some brands that genuinely make the effort to promote inclusivity.

Some brands that go the extra mile to support the LGBTQIA+ community, all year round, are:

- **Calvin Klein:** They have committed \$240,000 to NGOs dedicated to LGBTQIA+ equity and safety, whilst using openly queer individuals to promote their 'This is Love' campaign, such as Jeremy Pope and Cara Delevingne.
- **The Coca-Cola Company:** They demonstrate a long-term commitment to the LGBTQIA+ community, through their perfect Corporate Equality Index score, inclusive healthcare coverage, and actively opposes anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation.
- **PayPal:** Not only do they prioritise mental health, with resources like access to the Calm app, they also actively support their LGBTQIA+ employees through benefits. This includes assistance with surrogacy, adoption, and transgender healthcare.

Some other examples include Nike, Levi's, and the Skittle's brand. These brands know that LGBTQIA+ support is for every season, not just the month of June.

Authenticity:

The key to showing your support, without the negative stigma, is to support the LGBTQIA+ community beyond changing your logo. Instead of using June as a month to jump on a trend, we should highlight it as a designated month to shout about all the efforts made to create and implement inclusivity all year round.

There are a number of ways businesses can ensure they are supporting equality:

- **Develop and implement clear non-discrimination policies** that explicitly protect LGBTQIA+ employees.
- **Offer diversity and inclusion training** to educate staff on unconscious bias and create a culture of respect.
- **Establish employee resource groups (ERGs)** for LGBTQIA+ employees and allies to connect, share experiences, and provide support.



Ethical Investors Group is the trading name of Ethical Investors (UK) Ltd.

Registered in England and Wales.
Registration Number 2857294.

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- **Review and update benefits packages** to ensure they are inclusive and cater to the needs of LGBTQIA+ employees, such as domestic partner benefits and healthcare coverage that affirms their identities.
- **Champion LGBTQIA+ causes** by partnering with LGBTQIA+ organizations or sponsoring Pride events.

At Ethical Investors, we believe that inequality is at the heart of everything that matters. We understand that the workplace isn't always a safe space, and so we provide the information so you can make an informed decision of where to invest your money.

With the help of our sister company, Ethical Screening, we can meticulously research companies, looking for those that actively have and implement non-discrimination policies. So, if you feel strongly about creating inclusive environments for the LGBTQIA+ community, then we can help you invest in companies that align with those values – through every season, not just for the month of Pride.

Abigail Rolfe, Marketing and Communications Lead, June 2024

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