



PRESS RELEASE

Paris, June 23, 2026

Havas unveils new proprietary research ‘The Science of Desire’, redefining growth in the age of AI

- *New global report reveals that brands building desire are 2.4x more likely to grow, as Havas advances the next phase of its Converged.AI ecosystem, combining emotional connection with the intelligent use of data, technology and AI to drive long-term performance for clients.*
- *The Group also announces increased investment in Vurvey Labs, a next-generation agentic intelligence scale-up, combining real consumer interviews with AI-powered agents to help brands uncover deep behavioral insights at scale and translate them into actionable strategies and creative decisions.*



Yannick Bolloré, Chairman & CEO Havas, speaking at Havas' press briefing in Cannes.
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At the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, Havas today launches *The Science of Desire*, a new global study and strategic framework designed to help clients better understand what drives brand preference, loyalty and growth, further operationalizing the Group's client-centric positioning, *Growth, Powered by Desire*.

Building on more than a decade of Havas' Meaningful Brands research, this work marks an evolution from measuring relevance to understanding and activating what drives consumer choice. In a market reshaped by unprecedented data and automation, visibility alone is no longer enough. Brands must create stronger reasons to be chosen, and keep being chosen over time.

Based on insights from 87,500+ respondents, 2,400+ brands across 10 markets, and 1,000 AI-powered interviews, the study explores why and how desire has become a critical driver of growth. The findings reveal that desire operates through three interconnected drivers - **attraction, affinity, and attachment**-, forming a reinforcing loop that compounds over time.

Brands that build desire significantly outperform. They deliver:

- **2.2x more fame**
- **+87% more pricing power**
- **2.4x more sustained growth**

This advantage extends to every brand category and, importantly, into AI-driven environments, where desirable brands are significantly more likely to be surfaced, with up to **4x higher likelihood of being cited by AI**. Desire even cuts through automation.

Yet, the study shows a widespread "desire deficit" persists, with **84% of brands sitting in a middle ground of indifference** and achieving just 61% of their potential.

"At Havas, we believe growth starts with what truly moves people. In today's AI-driven landscape, the most successful brands will be those that combine technological power with deep human understanding and creativity, to build lasting connections. With *The Science of Desire* and the continued evolution of our Converged.AI ecosystem, we are equipping our clients to unlock stronger, more sustainable growth," said **Yannick Bolloré**, Chairman and CEO of Havas.

"Being seen is not enough. You must be desired. In a world where optimization is increasingly automated, creativity is what creates connection, builds desire and drives growth. Technology may amplify brands, but desire gives them gravity," added **Mark Sinnock**, Global Chief Strategy, Data and Innovation Officer at Havas Creative Network.

"When brands are actively chosen by more people, spending more, not just once but repeatedly over time - that's when growth happens," said **Joanna Lawrence**, Global Chief Strategy Officer at Havas Media Network.

Scaling Converged.AI to turn insight into action

To bring these insights to life, Havas is advancing the next phase of its Converged.AI ecosystem.

As part of this evolution, **Havas has increased its investment in Vurvey Labs**, a next-generation agentic intelligence scale-up, and will act as lead investor in its Series B funding round. This investment is within Havas' previously announced commitment to invest €400 million in data, technology, and AI through 2027. Built on a proprietary "people model" trained on millions of real consumer interviews conducted through AI agents, Vurvey generates synthetic audiences that reflect real human behaviors. It enables brands to test products, messaging and campaigns before going to market, translating insights into actionable decisions with greater speed and confidence.

“From the beginning, we believed there was a missing layer in AI: a true understanding of people in motion. At Vurvey, we are building the world's leading human AI company, helping organizations better anticipate how people think, feel and make decisions, well beyond static snapshots. Havas recognized that vision early, and this expanded investment reflects a shared ambition to build the next generation of human-centered AI,” said **Chad Reynolds**, Founder & CEO of Vurvey Labs.

As part of the broader Converged.AI evolution, Havas is advancing several additional key developments:

- **Strategic partnerships:** the partnership with **Akkio**, a leader in AI-powered infrastructure for media agencies, is accelerating the agentic layer of Converged.AI, enabling teams to model scenarios faster, analyze more granular data and surface decisions where human judgment matters most.
- **Accelerated creativity:** since its launch in 2025, Vermeer.ai, Havas’ proprietary gen-AI production solution developed by Prose on Pixels, has evolved into a flexible, technology-agnostic creative ecosystem, brought to life at the Havas Café to demonstrate how teams can deliver high-quality, audience-first content at scale while maintaining craft and control.
- **Productivity at scale:** through AVA, its secure AI platform providing access to LLMs across the Group, Havas enables its 23,000 talents to seamlessly work across multiple models while retaining context and continuity. Built on an agentic foundation developed by Ekino, the platform drives advanced workflow orchestration and upskilling, allowing teams to focus on higher-value strategic work.
- **Trusted and secure governance:** Havas is scaling AI responsibly, through a privacy-safe environment and controlled deployment of capabilities, with safeguards on data, intellectual property and content integrity.

“The opportunity with AI is not simply to optimize performance, but to elevate how we connect data, insight and decision-making. By combining human judgment with intelligent systems, we enable our clients to scale relevance, enhance creativity and build more relevant, desirable brand experiences,” said **Dan Hagen**, Global Chief Data & Technology Officer at Havas.

Together, these advancements reflect Havas’ “Growth, Powered by Desire” positioning, where deep human insight meets intelligent technology to drive long-term growth for clients. They reinforce the Group’s belief that the future of marketing lies in the powerful combination of human and machine intelligence.

Download ‘The Science of Desire’ at <https://www.havascienceofdesire.com/>.

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About Havas

Founded in 1835 in Paris, Havas is one of the world's largest global communications groups, with nearly 23,000 people in over 100 countries. With the ambition to help brands unlock Growth, Powered by Desire, Havas brings together creativity, media, technology and production capabilities to build strong, desirable brands that people genuinely want to engage with. Its integrated model is supported by Converged.AI, the Group's operating system that unifies data, technology and AI to deliver optimized, scalable marketing solutions across the full customer journey. AI-driven, fueled by human ingenuity, and grounded in the belief that desire drives both brand performance and business outcomes, Havas teams collaborate within Havas Villages worldwide to cultivate reputation, relevance and long-term preference for clients. Havas is equally committed to its people, fostering inclusive, responsible and inspiring workplaces where talent can thrive, because desire also starts from within. Further information is available at www.havas.com.