

Always ensuring you're in sync with:

MACRO FORCESshaping hearts
and minds**HUMAN TRENDS**emerging behavior
and attitudes**CURRENT INSIGHTS**decoding, driving
connections and intimacy

You Better Work!

September officially marks the end of (brat) summer. Vacations are over, kids head back to school, and we all dive back into the daily grind. Inspired by [RuPaul's iconic bop](#), this month is about channeling that “You Better Work” energy. It’s a call to step up, push forward, and face challenges head on.

So, let’s shake off that summer haze and work it!



CULTURE SPOTLIGHT

**Take a dip**

The job market has seemed suspiciously steady, especially in the post-COVID world. And it turns out, those suspicions may have been warranted, as the Labor Department stated that there were **800k fewer jobs added to the market than it reported back in March**. See what this could mean for TCCC’s business goals and the economy at large.

DIP IN »

Source: NPR

Classroom in crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic turned the education of Gen Z upside down, creating a “learning loss” crisis that schools are still grappling with. For example, only **26% of 8th graders were at or above proficiency in math in 2022, compared to 33% in 2019**. Now, Harvard experts are investigating how AI can counteract the learning loss caused by COVID-19. Discover more about COVID learning loss and how AI is being used to support Gen Z and older Alphas.

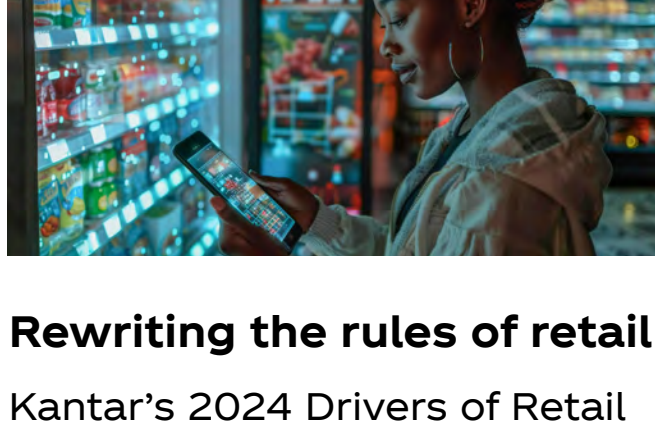
PEEK AT THE ANSWER KEY »

GENERATE SOLUTIONS WITH AI »

Sources: The Annie E. Casey Foundation



NEW TRENDS FROM HI

**Rewriting the rules of retail**

Kantar’s 2024 Drivers of Retail Change report highlights the dynamic shifts shaping the retail landscape across six key categories: Social, Wellness, Technological, Economic, Environmental, and Political. **From the rise of AI and mixed reality in shopping to growing concerns over consumer prices and environmental crises**, explore all of this year’s retail trends and see how they may set the stage for TCCC’s future planning.

READ THE FULL REPORT »

Source: Kantar

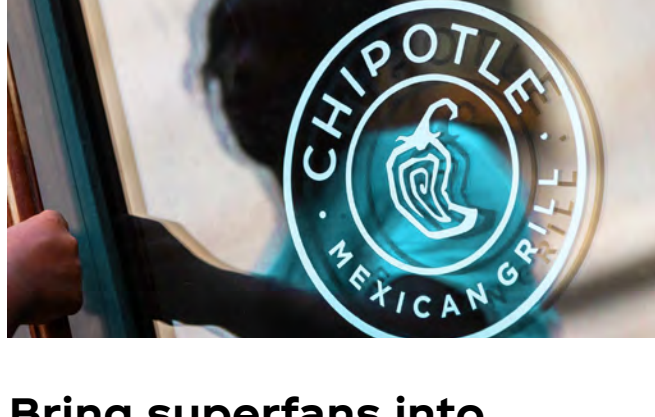
**Balancing act**

With 44% of U.S. employees feeling burned out and 51% feeling “used up” by the end of the day, it’s clear that traditional concepts of work-life balance are falling short. Enter **work-life fit** — a more flexible approach that aligns work commitments with personal priorities. Read more to get your gears going on where our brands can support a better work life.

FEEL THE BURN »

FIND YOUR FIT »

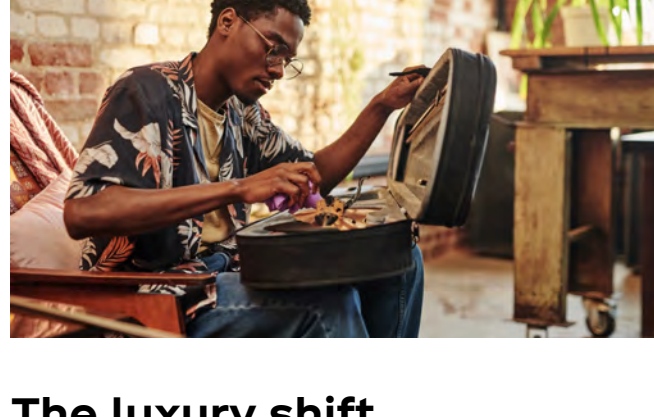
Sources: The Society for Human Resource Management, ShiftBase

**Bring superfans into the spotlight**

Chipotle’s Celebrity Card, a formerly-exclusive card that grants the cardholder free Chipotle for a year, is now being offered to loyal customers through their #CelebCardContest. In a time when traditional influencer endorsements can be seen as inauthentic, this is a great reminder to focus on our brand’s true movers-and-shakers—the everyday consumers.

TAKE CENTER STAGE »

Source: Mintel

**The luxury shift**

As homeownership seems increasingly out of reach for many in Gen Z, this generation is channeling its purchase power into luxury items for their rented spaces. From high-end Jell-O molds to designer humidifiers, young consumers are redefining their living spaces with smaller, yet meaningful, splurges. TCCC is primed to position itself as an accessible luxury to this audience. Get inspired to communicate how TCCC products can elevate life without breaking the bank.

SPRUCE THINGS UP »

Source: Dieline

RESEARCH RECAP

It’s a HIT

September 10th saw the kickoff of 2026 Planning with HIT Day, infusing insights into the Marketing organization to ignite planning. If you missed it or want to revisit the content, we’ve got you covered with videos from the mainstage presentations and materials from the Circuit Training. Click the link below to take you to the Spark channel with all the HIT content to get you fit for planning!

HIT ME »



UPCOMING INSIGHTS & EVENTS

On The Come Up

**Gen Alpha Research**

October will bring the long-awaited Gen Alpha report, where you’ll learn more about your youngest consumers and their parents. Stay tuned for more next month.

**LEVEL SET, GO!**

And speaking of getting to work, Level Set is happening in September and October, depending on your category. Your Human Insights leads have sent your fact packs, so come ready to dig in so we can start planning the best version of TCCC for 2026 and beyond. LET’S GET BUSY!

Thoughts or suggestions on
future installments of Pop!?**We want to hear from you!**

By taking 2 minutes to fill out this survey, you’re helping to build a better experience for our audience.

TAKE THE SURVEY »

Anything that caught your eye this month? Let’s talk about it! We’d love to help your team incorporate these insights into your next project — just email naouhumaninsightsnewsletter@coke-cola.com to get started.