emperor

The European perspective

How companies in Europe are meeting the expectations of the human stakeholders and the needs of AI.

Proudly employee owned.

Amid regulatory rollbacks, AI advancements, and geopolitical uncertainty, companies need to deliver clear, consistent and authentic reporting that **meets the expectations of human stakeholders and the needs of AI.**

emperor

Our sample

We reviewed the reporting and communications of **21** of the largest **European companies** across **6 jurisdictions.** We looked not only at their annual reports but across their reporting suites more broadly – including sustainability reporting and digital channels.

AXA
Sika
LINDT & SPRÜNGLI
ABInBev
Glenveagh
SAINT-GOBAIN
adyen
adidas
AIB
Pernod Ricard
Henkel
ucb
Schneider Electric
HEINEKEN
Kingspan
Ahold Delhaize
CAIRN
Nestlé
BMW GROUP
Givaudan
BAYER

Our findings

We've split our findings into four key themes, aligned to our broader communications principles, which explore how companies can meet evolving stakeholder needs and engage effectively.

01.
Compelling equity story

02.
Integrated joined-up thinking

03.
Credible sustainability disclosures

04.
Connected reporting suites

Compelling equity story

Increasing investor expectations and competition for capital means companies need to provide a clear and compelling equity story that demonstrates the opportunities in the market, business differentiation and progress against strategically-aligned metrics.

01.

emperor

Compelling equity story

Key Takeaways:

Include a standalone investment case that outlines business strengths and provides evidence of performance as the foundation for your equity story.

38%

provided an investment case either within one of their reports or online

Demonstrate how your strategy and business model position you to benefit from the market trends outlined in market overview to add credibility to your equity story.

67%

linked their strategy to their market context

With AI playing such a prominent part in today's corporate conversations, provide a clear articulation of your approach to innovation, technology and AI and the associated risks and opportunities.

86%

provided some evidence of innovation, technology and AI to drive growth

Include a compelling, data-driven investment case

38%

provided an investment case either within one of their reports or online

▶ **Glenveagh Properties** provided a succinct yet persuasive investment case, with five headings, each supported by data proof points.

.

4 Our investment case

A clear strategic focus and effective business model make Glenveagh a compelling investment

We are the leading Irish homebuilder, delivering high-quality suburban homes and urban apartments, supported by our market-leading landbank and established partnerships with local authorities and state agencies. Our vertically integrated business model and focus on innovation allow for better cost control and improved efficiency, helping us to mitigate supply chain risks, manage costs, and optimise margins. As such, we are well-positioned to capitalise on the growth trends in the Irish economy today and into the future.

Well invested

A fully assembled, high-quality landbank providing long-term delivery visibility and embedded value

- High-quality, actionable and low-risk landbank focused on affordable own-door housing.
- Supporting delivery of between 2,750 and 3,600 units per annum through to 2030, without the need for further material land investment.
- Approximately 74% located in the Greater Dublin Area with 83% comprising own-door product – the deepest and most resilient demand segments by location and typology.

Fully owned landbank

19,000 units

Cost per unit

€31,000

Vertically integrated

A manufacturing-led, vertically integrated delivery model enhancing cost certainty and execution capability

- Glenveagh operates Ireland's largest off-site manufacturing platform, with approximately 400,000 square feet of production capacity across three facilities.
- Assembled for just over €70 million of capital investment to date, representing compelling value for money in establishing a vertically integrated production footprint of scale.
- Core to our integrated delivery system spanning land acquisition, planning, standardised design, off-site production and on-site assembly.

Target PMV

70%

5 Our investment case continued

Market driven

We operate in a thriving market with strong demand, structural undersupply, and supportive government policy

5.46m

€14.5bn

Value added

Our organisation has comprehensive and highly developed portfolio skills, allowing us to plan, design, construct, deliver and sell effectively

99%

95%

Capital efficient

We manage our capital carefully and precisely, maximising our returns and allocating effectively

€534m

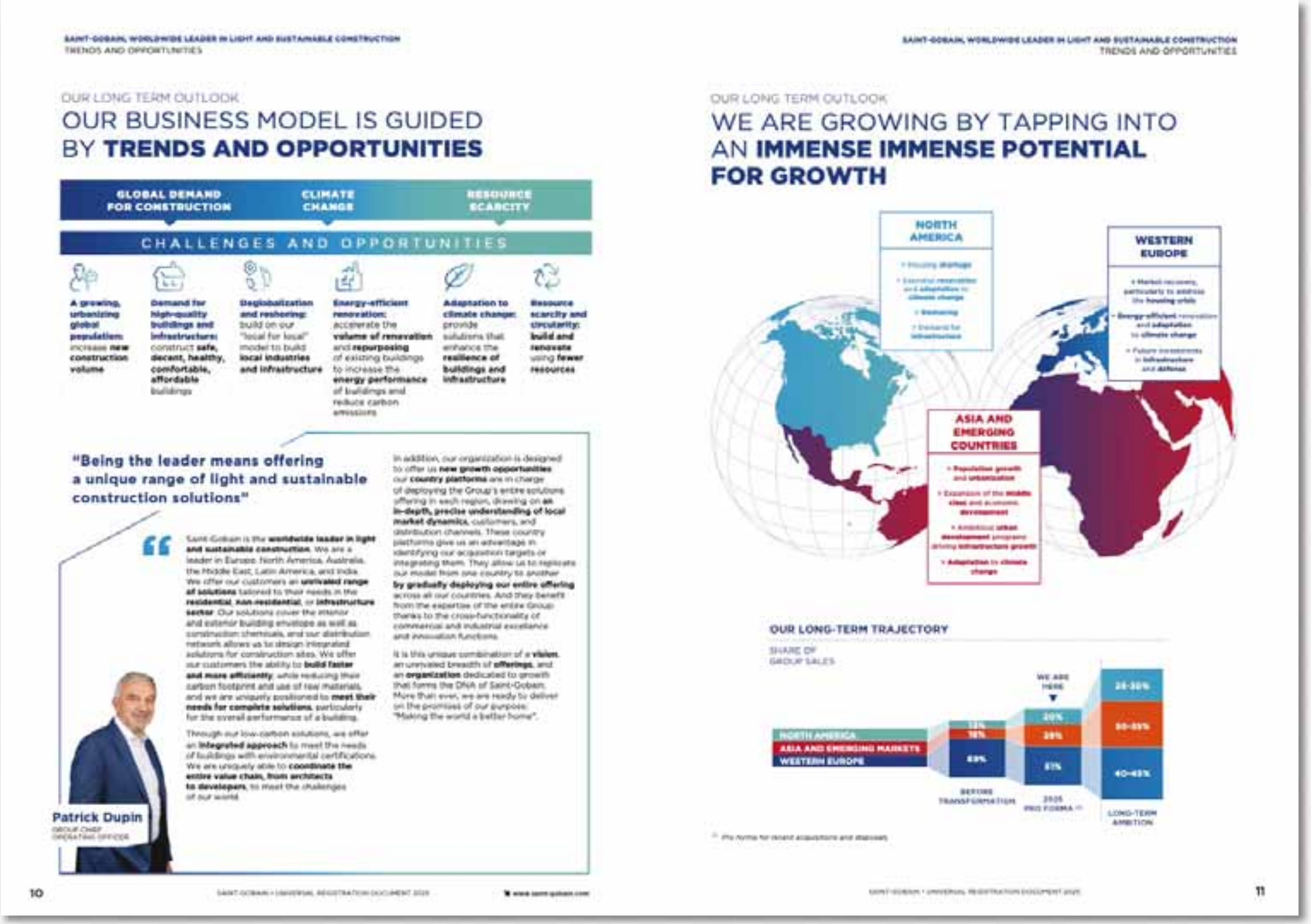
€420m+

Demonstrate how market conditions drive your strategy and inform your business model

67%

linked their strategy to their market context

As a global supplier of sustainable construction materials, **Saint Gobain**'s business model and strategy are framed within the context of market trends and opportunities.



OUR LONG TERM OUTLOOK

OUR BUSINESS MODEL IS GUIDED BY **TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

GLOBAL DEMAND FOR CONSTRUCTION | CLIMATE CHANGE | RESOURCE SCARCITY

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

"Being the leader means offering a unique range of light and sustainable construction solutions"

Patrick Dupin

OUR LONG TERM OUTLOOK

WE ARE GROWING BY TAPPING INTO AN **IMMENSE IMMENSE POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH**

NORTH AMERICA

WESTERN EUROPE

ASIA AND EMERGING COUNTRIES

OUR LONG-TERM TRAJECTORY

Evidence how and where you are employing technology to create a competitive advantage

86%

provided some evidence of applying innovation, technology and AI to drive growth

71%

identified their approach to sustainability as a competitive edge

▶ **Schneider Electric** identified AI and Digitalization as a mega-trend, an area of expertise and as a strategic pillar.

Evidence how and where you are employing technology to create a competitive advantage

86%

provided some evidence of applying innovation, technology and AI to drive growth

▶ **Nestlé** mentioned AI throughout its report, outlining its use in improving efficiency, automation, decision support, digital twinning of factories and upskilling people.

Accelerating our business transformation

To power our growth, we are reshaping our organization to be leaner, more agile and digitally empowered. Across the Group, we are streamlining structures, standardizing functions, and harnessing technology and automation, while maintaining our very high standards for safety and quality. These efforts are generating efficiencies and unlocking resources that we can invest in the businesses, capabilities, tools and activities that will drive our future success.

Smarter, faster, better ways of working will enable us to deliver our *Fuel for Growth* cost savings target of CHF 3.0 billion by the end of 2027. Here are some examples from across the company of how we are pursuing our transformation.

Leading digital transformation in Zone AOA

In 2025, we commenced a major upgrade of our global digital core, based on SAP technology, beginning in Zone Asia, Oceania and Africa (AOA). This upgrade will enable us to deploy AI at scale to not only achieve better insights but also automate and improve processes across our business operations. Thanks to Nestlé's streamlined tech architecture, we are on track to complete this upgrade across the entire Group within just two years.

PERSPECTIVE

Remy Ejel
CEO Zone Asia, Oceania and Africa

"We made this upgrade across the zone in 112 countries for 50 000 employees, and we did it with no interruptions to our operations. Our teams are already reaping some of the benefits."

PERSPECTIVE

Anna Manz
Chief Financial Officer

"We are using AI to better understand the lead indicators that are driving our profit and loss statement. Ultimately, agentic AI will help us advise our teams on the actions they need to take to see better results."

Empowering finance with AI

Nestlé's finance teams are harnessing the power of a unified Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and standardized data to deploy advanced AI analytics. These tools enable rapid identification of performance challenges, root causes and inefficiencies, while enhancing forecasting accuracy. For example, we are leveraging AI to automate data cleansing and report generation, while also replacing manual forecasting with advanced statistical models for greater accuracy and efficiency. This is enabling our finance teams to focus more on interpreting results, supporting the business to make decisions and advising on strategy.

Harmonizing recipes to simplify

Nestlé recipe specifications across brands, products and markets have often varied, as a result of brand acquisitions or local customizations, for instance. Our R&D ingredient experts, material recipe managers and procurement teams collaborate to validate and implement harmonized specifications, having reduced them by around 50% since 2019 and by around 10% since 2024. With digital dashboards that track our raw material requirements, we have been able to make well-informed decisions about ingredient sourcing faster. In addition, we are also applying this harmonized specification approach to packaging materials. As a result, procurement processes across all raw materials have become more efficient and cost-effective.

PERSPECTIVE

Stefan Palzer
Chief Technology Officer

"We are leveraging our expertise across categories to develop a global approach to recipe and material specification. By complementing this with digital tools, we are becoming more efficient, while ensuring safety, compliance and preference."

PERSPECTIVE

Stephanie Pullings Hart
Chief Operations Officer

"Our goal is 100% digitally connected, end-to-end operations – seamlessly orchestrating every step of the value chain, optimizing inventory, automating processes, and ensuring real-time supply chain visibility for smarter, data-driven decisions."

Driving efficiency with connected operations

In 2025, we expanded our e-auctions platform. Around 85% of our procurement teams now use it for over 40% of Nestlé's purchasing spend. Through the real-time process, suppliers respond to our purchasing need, competing instantly on price, quality and quantity. The secure, online tool is accelerating Nestlé's sourcing process and reducing its costs, with many transactions delivering up to 10% in incremental savings.

We also scaled our single manufacturing system to nearly 90% of our 335 factories. These connected factories utilize real-time data to optimize line performance, minimize downtime and increase automation. Our manufacturing performance now ranks in the top quartile among peers. We aim to further enhance operations with AI, robotics and the use of digital twins.

Increasing brand-building effectiveness

We are transforming our brand-building capabilities by applying technology at scale. In 2025, we made significant progress in consistently measuring marketing return on investment (ROI), using advanced marketing mix modeling to optimize both short-term sales and long-term brand building. We launched an innovative AI-driven service that uses digital twins to create product visuals for e-commerce and Nestlé assets, empowering marketing teams to produce creative content faster, more economically and at scale.

Sales teams increased their use of AI and analytics to optimize in-store execution and promotional spend. We built a virtual sales assistant, powered by agentic AI, that is automating up to 40% of routine tasks and generating a time savings of 20–35% on such tasks for salespeople in pilot markets.

PERSPECTIVE

David Rennie
Head of Strategic Business Units, Marketing and Sales

"We equip marketing and sales teams with digital tools that boost quality, efficiency and effectiveness – delivering better ROI and enabling greater focus on growing our brands and winning with our consumers and customers."

26 Nestlé – Annual Review 2025

Nestlé – Annual Review 2025 27

Integrated joined-up thinking

emperor

02.

Supported by regulation, sustainability is now business-as-usual for many companies. Increasingly, however, companies are expected to incorporate management of material environmental, social and governance topics into their corporate narrative and strategy. Moreover, stakeholders are keen to hear from companies with a clear role to play in the sustainability transition and the corresponding opportunities.

Integrated joined-up thinking

Key Takeaways:

Clearly articulate how sustainability is embedded into your business, driving performance and long-term value creation. Communicate an integrated strategy or demonstrate alignment between your corporate and sustainability strategies.

57%

communicated a fully integrated strategy (vs. 32% in FY24)

Highlight and describe your role within the sustainability transition, detailing and championing specific and strategically-relevant opportunities.

81%

described having some role in the sustainability transition

Employees remain a strong source of competitive advantage. While US influence has reshaped EDI disclosures, you should continue to report meaningfully on issues that impact your workforce, from training & development to AI.

29%

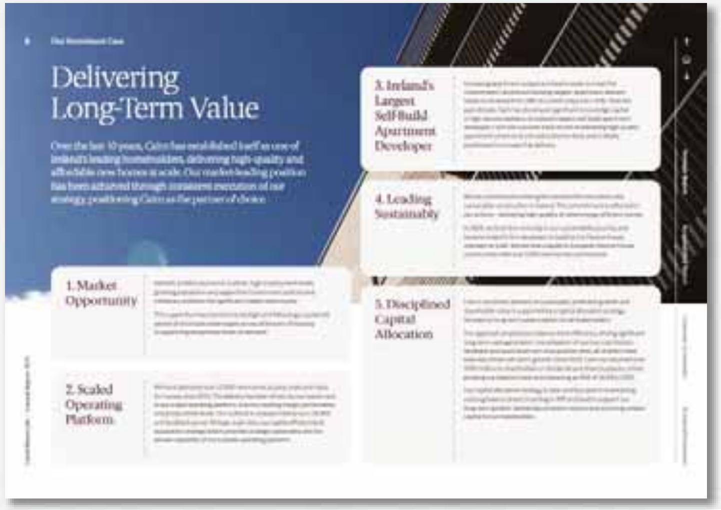
altered their reporting on equity, diversity and inclusion

Make clear the link between your corporate strategy and sustainability

57%

communicated a fully integrated strategy

▶ Sustainability is embedded into **Cairn Homes'** corporate strategy and presented as a key reason to invest.



Make clear the link between your corporate strategy and sustainability

77%

of companies with separate strategies failed to credibly describe how they are linked

▶ **AIB Group** provided a clear description of how its separate corporate and sustainability strategies are aligned, detailing that the latter aids delivery of the former.


44

Our Sustainability Strategy

We remain committed to advancing a more sustainable future – strengthening long-term resilience for our business, customers, economy and society.

Empowering people to build a sustainable future

Customer first

Greening our business

Operational efficiency and resilience

Our Sustainability Strategy

Climate & Environmental Action

Societal & Workforce Progress

Governance & Responsible Business

45

Climate & Environmental Action

Societal & Workforce Progress

Governance & Responsible Business

Champion your role and opportunities in the sustainability transition

81%

described having some role in the sustainability transition

62%

identified the transition as an opportunity within their core business strategy

▶ **Schneider Electric** identified the energy transition as a mega-trend and credibly described it as a catalyst for market growth.

Provide meaningful reporting on the issues that impact your workforce

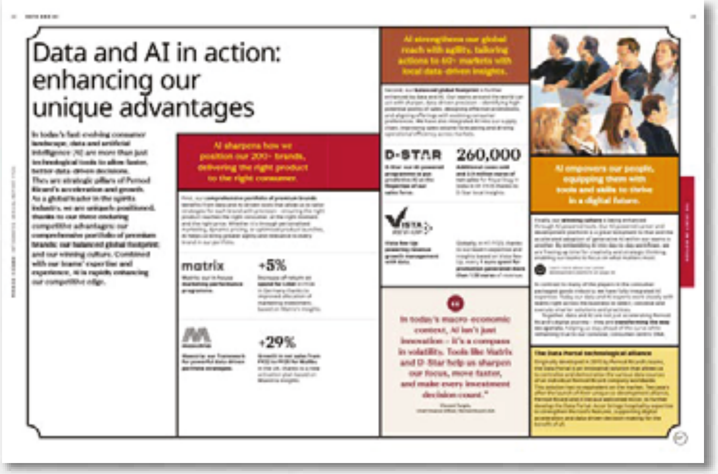
29%

altered their reporting on equity, diversity and inclusion

38%

discussed the impact of AI on their workforce

▶ **Pernod Ricard** demonstrated a clear focus on workforce issues, including descriptions of how AI is empowering employees.



emperor.works

emperor

03.

Credible sustainability disclosures

The post-Omnibus outlook is full of uncertainty and challenge. While regulatory standards are being simplified, internal and external expectations continue to rise. Stakeholders are looking for companies to deliver clear, concise and decision-useful sustainability disclosures and insights into how they manage their material impacts, risks and opportunities.

emperor

Credible sustainability disclosures

Key Takeaways:

Continue to consolidate and streamline your sustainability statements in preparation for reporting against the revised, simplified ESRS.

67%

decreased the page count of their sustainability statements

Enhance descriptions of your material impacts, risks and opportunities with company-specific detail, making them more relevant and decision-useful for key stakeholders.

42

average number of IROs disclosed

In line with best practice, adopt a bespoke sustainability statement structure to improve navigability and reader experience. In addition, communicate a clear sustainability narrative up front in the report.

48%

did not directly structure their statements against the ESRS disclosure requirements

Mature your descriptions of your impacts, risks and opportunities

26%

disclosed more identified material IROs

44%

enhanced their descriptions of IROs

Glenveagh Properties located a summary and comprehensive descriptions of IRO in the general information and topical reporting sections of their sustainability statement.

Enhance the structure of your statement to improve navigability and reader experience

122

average page count of sustainability statements

76%

incorporated disclosure by reference

Ahold Delhaize adopted a bespoke sustainability statement structure, combining disclosures and adding complementary content to improve reader experience.

emperor

Enhance the structure of your statement to improve navigability and reader experience

48%

did not directly structure their statements against the ESRS disclosure requirements

▶ **AIB Group** structured its sustainability statement around the articulation of its sustainability strategy, using tailored, accessible headings.

Communicate your sustainability positioning and narrative up front in your report

45%

included an additional sustainability section and/or content separate to their sustainability statement

≈8

average page count of sustainability section separate to statement

▶ **AB InBev** included a decision-useful sustainability performance summary up front in its report, housing engaging case studies.

emperor.works

emperor

emperor

04.

Connected reporting suites

Stakeholders want to see consistent and impactful messaging and reporting across diverse channels and touchpoints, while some audiences will require more detailed disclosures across an ever-widening set of issues. In addition, AI is increasingly used to search for information. Companies need to build connected, digitally enabled reporting suites that are tailored to meet diverse stakeholder needs and optimised for AI.

Connected reporting suites

Key Takeaways:

Ensure that your reporting is visible to AI by appropriately tagging your PDF document and expanding your digital presence with an embedded, multi-page Online Annual Report (OAR) that includes AI-friendly formats.

29%
published an embedded OAR

Counteract regulatory-driven disclosure by developing bespoke communications tools tailored to meet the needs and interests of specific stakeholders. Innovative examples include digital magazines and podcasts.

19%
published Summary Sustainability Reports

Cascade content from your report across your corporate website and social media to drive ongoing stakeholder engagement. Repurpose content, incorporating video and interactive features, to tell an authentic story.

43%
repurposed content from their Annual Report onto their website

Publish an embedded, multi-page Online Annual Report

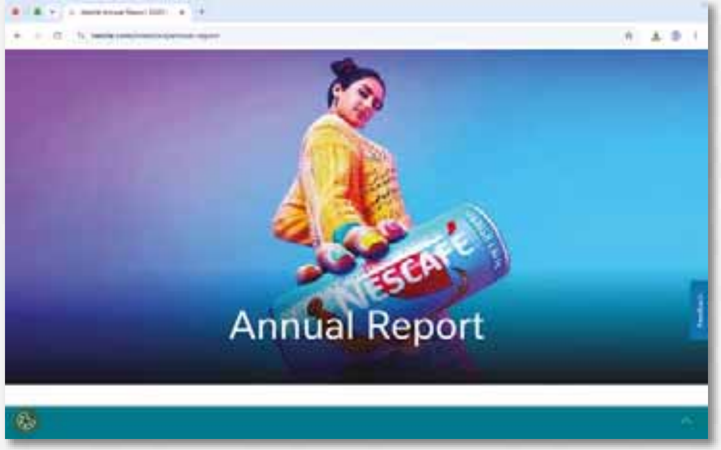
64%

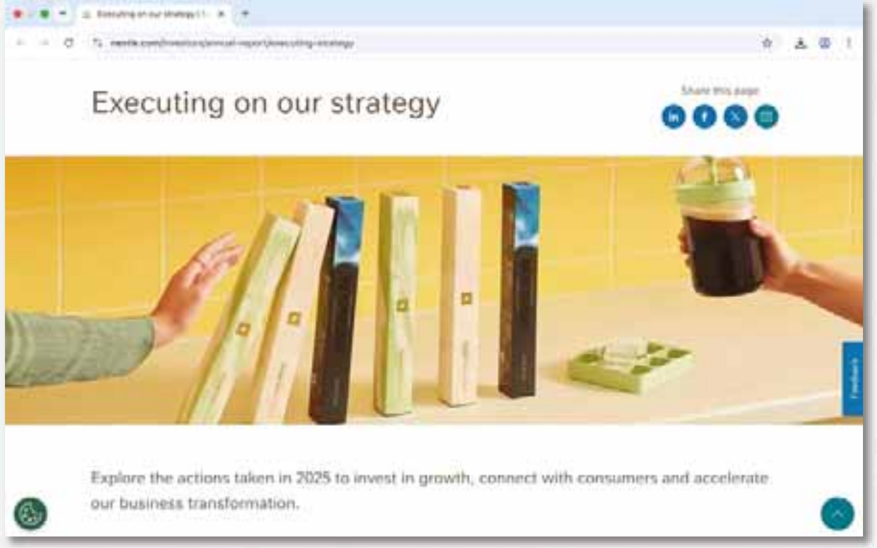
of OARs were multi-page

91%

of OARs incorporated interactive and dynamic features (vs. 55% in FY24)

▶ **Nestlé** shared an engaging online report with multiple pages, providing a summary of performance for the year. The user experience was enhanced by the integration of interactive figures.



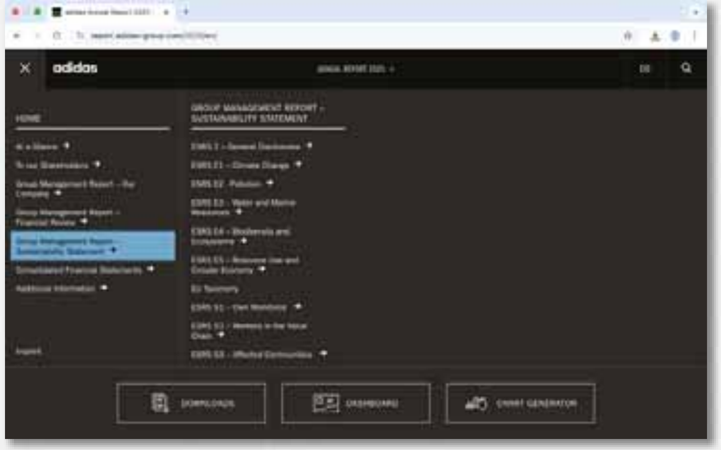


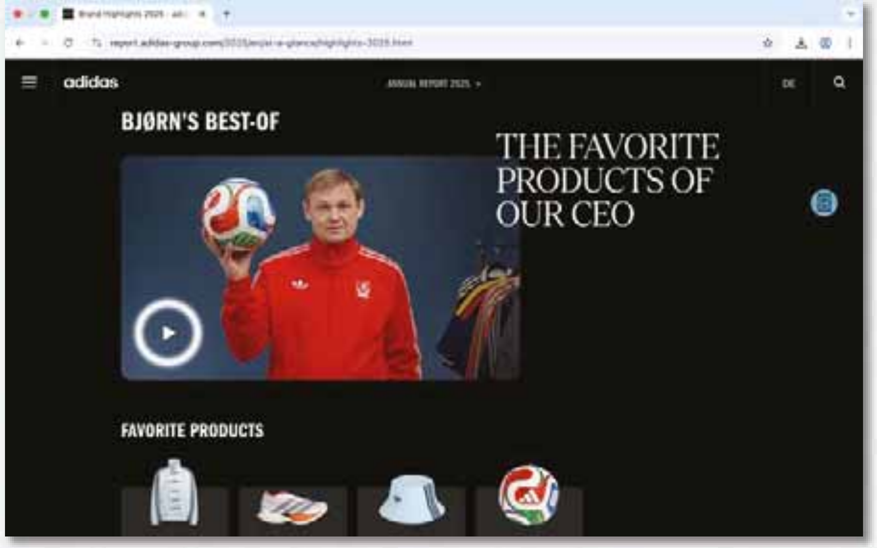
Ensure that your reporting can be scraped by AI

27%

of OARs repurposed the full contents of the Annual Report

▶ **Adidas'** fully digitalised report integrated technical sections including financial and sustainability statements, as well as engaging videos.





Expand your reporting network, tailoring to stakeholder needs and interests

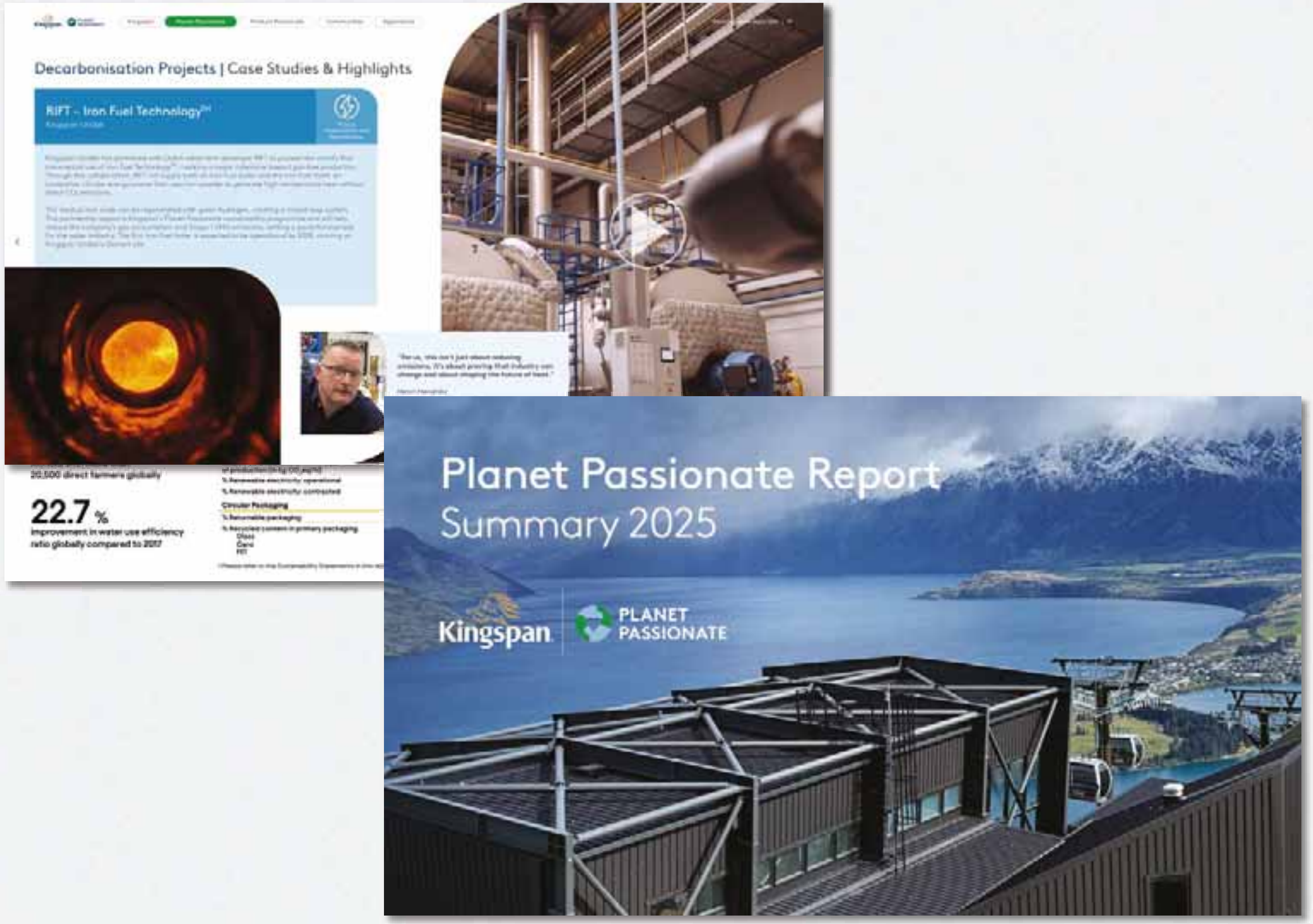
29%

published standalone Sustainability Reports (vs. 12% in FY24)

19%

published Summary Sustainability Reports

- **Kingspan** published digital and summary versions of its sustainability report, the former with embedded videos.



Push boundaries, embracing innovative approaches

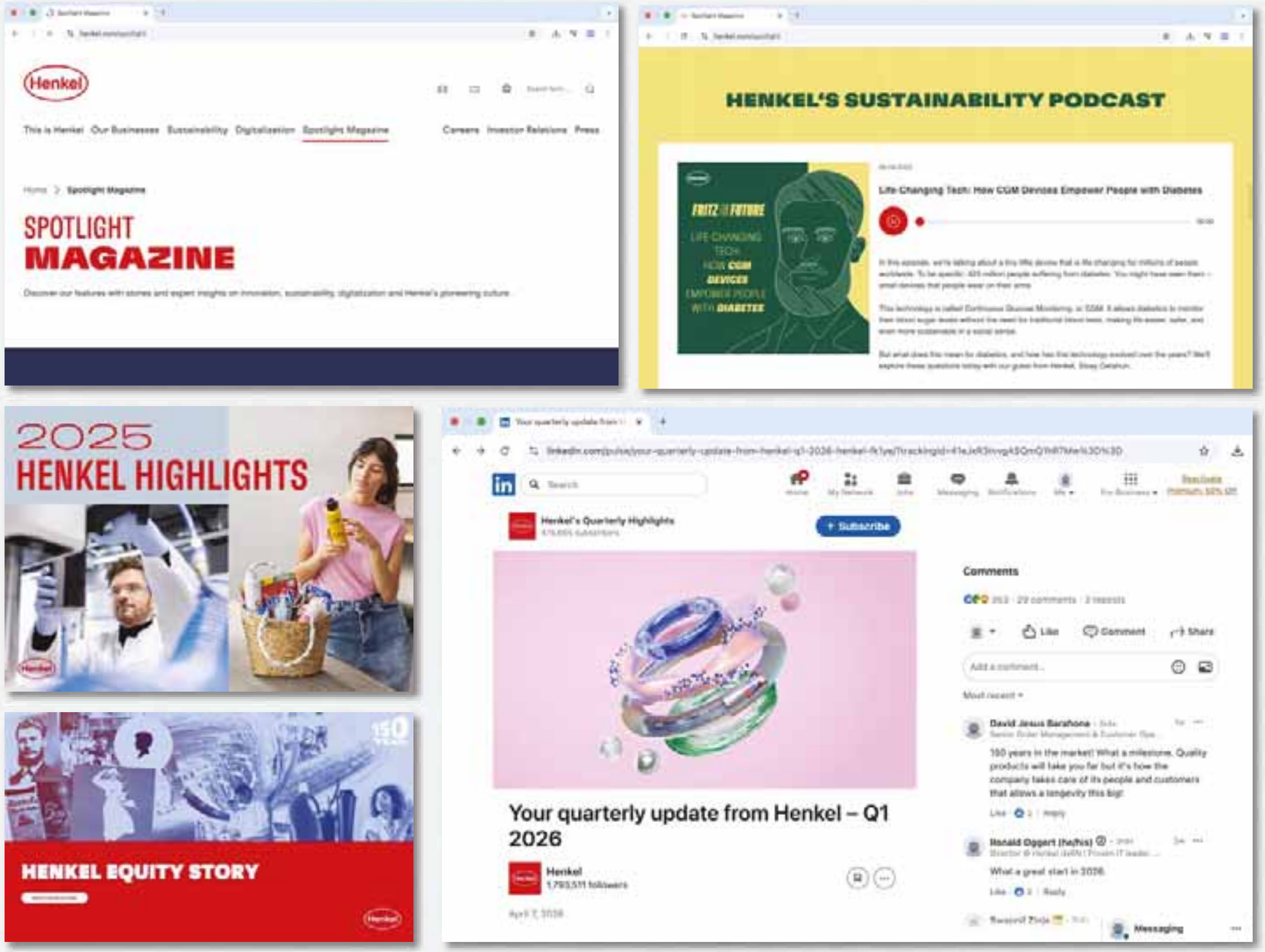
33%

used social media to promote their Annual Report release

14%

used social media to promote the release of their other annual reporting documents (e.g. their Sustainability Report)

▶ **Henkel** engages with key stakeholders through diverse channels and alternative, tailored reporting documents.



Cascade content from your report across your corporate website for humans and AI

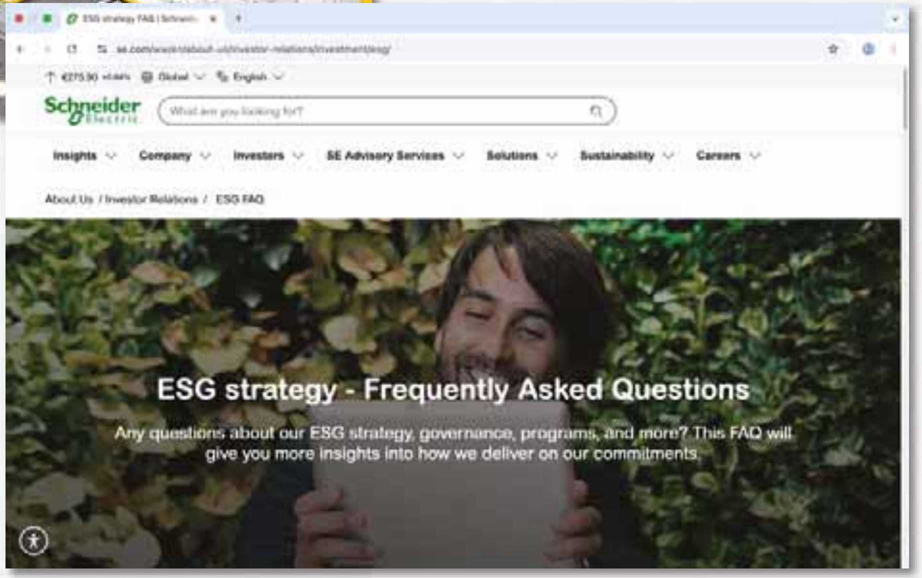
35%

reported progress against their sustainability targets on their website

55%

incorporated video in their About us and/ or Investors overview webpages

▼ **Sika's** interactive map is an engaging way for stakeholders to learn about sustainability initiatives.



▶ **Schneider Electric** used an ESG FAQ page to add insights.

In summary

Compelling equity story

Craft a coherent equity story that connects market context, strategy, capital allocation, sustainability, and long-term value creation. Use consistent metrics and targets to build trust, demonstrate resilience and how you create sustainable value.

Integrated joined-up thinking

Make clear the link between your strategy, performance and approach to sustainability. If appropriate, also outline your role and any identified opportunities in the sustainability transition, and provide meaningful reporting of the issues that impact your workforce including AI.

Credible sustainability disclosures

Ensure that your IRO descriptions are substantive and provide useful insights to stakeholders. Also enhance engagement with your sustainability disclosure through adopting a bespoke, streamlined statement structure and driving your sustainability narrative up front in your report.

Connected reporting suites

Meet the needs of stakeholders by making sure your reporting is visible to AI. Also optimise your broader reporting suite, making your digital channels integral sources of information and publishing reports tailored to different stakeholder needs and interests.

Let’s talk

We recognise the challenges companies face when navigating the complex corporate communications landscape.

Our specialist team offers deep expertise in corporate and sustainability reporting, offering clear insight into emerging trends and regulatory developments.

We work closely with our clients to create impactful, engaging reporting and communications that cut through.

Rachel Crossley

Director of Stakeholder Communications
rachel.crossley@emperor.works

Oliver MacMahon

Senior Consultant
oliver.macmahon@emperor.works

Richard Mellis

Senior Consultant
richard.mellis@emperor.works

Thank you.

If you have any questions please give us a call and we’ll help.

emperor

Proudly employee owned.