

THE TOP 20 MARKETING TRENDS FOR

2020



INTRODUCTION

As an industry, we have never experienced so much growth as quickly as we are today.

Sure, it's natural for industries to evolve as new trends, tools and technologies are introduced.

But what we're talking about in this white paper is the result of so much more than natural industry growth. It's the combination of the *volume* of trends and the *speed* at which they're being introduced that has made the past couple years feel like you're looking out the window of your car watching a train speed past in the opposite direction.

In years past, we have released a white paper uncovering our top 10 marketing trends for the upcoming year.

This year, though, is a little different. Ten seems so...small. Meaningless. Like a blip on the radar.

Why not go into 2020, we pondered, with 20 trends shaping the industry?

So that's what we've done.

You won't find all the answers in this white paper (hey, that's what Google is for), but you'll get some high-level thinking about these evolving trends and what they may mean for your business. We've categorized the trends into five main areas—overarching, digital, social media, traditional media and creative—where we're seeing some bigger leaps.

NOW, ON TO THE 20...

1

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

With the 2020 election now less than a year away, it might seem like it's too early to even be *thinking* about election campaigns, not to mention *seeing* political ads. But they've already started cycling through, most noticeably with President Trump's bid for re-election that aired during Game 7 of the World Series this past October to the tune of a quarter of a million dollars. But that doesn't even make a small dent in presidential hopeful Michael Bloomberg's \$37 million two-week TV campaign that kicked off on Nov. 23 with his official bid. On a much smaller scale, other presidential hopefuls have kicked off their efforts in critical states.

Just to put this all in perspective, \$6.5 billion was spent on the presidential and congressional races in the 2016 elections, according to campaign finance site OpenSecrets.org. It's expected that political ads for the elections in 2020 will generate at *least* \$10 billion, according to GroupM.

If you're like most Americans, you are already so over it. And it hasn't even really begun.

With the heightened scrutiny of political ads on social platforms, Twitter's CEO Jack Dorsey recently announced that the platform

won't support political ads moving forward. Facebook, on the other hand, *will* run political ads and *will not* "police" or fact-check political ad content, according to Mark Zuckerberg. "In a democracy, I don't think it's right for private companies to censor politicians, or the news," he said in an October 2019 earnings call.

Google had been pretty quiet on the issue until it published a blog in late November announcing its new political ad policies. "...given recent concerns and debates about political advertising, and the importance of shared trust in the democratic process, we want to improve voters' confidence in the political ads they may see on our ad platforms," wrote Scott Spencer, vice president of product management for Google Ads. "So we're making a few changes to how we handle political ads on our platforms globally." Among those changes is that election ads can no longer be targeted based on political affiliation.

As we move into 2020 and get closer to the various elections, we anticipate seeing even more changes to how candidates and political groups will be able to reach voters.

2

AUTHENTIC CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES**OVERARCHING**

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

We've been talking about the customer experience for a while now, helping brands create and deliver authentic, meaningful experiences that drive engagement, action and loyalty. It's not enough anymore for a customer to have a memorable experience. What happens afterward is just as important.

Consumers are craving more "real" brand interactions that are unscripted, authentic and from the heart. They want to be known, to be understood. They want personalized communications that feel like they're coming from a friend. And more than anything, they don't want to feel like you're selling to them.

A recent article in *The New York Times* titled "The Advertising Industry Has a Problem: People Hate Ads" reinforced this notion. So writes *Times* business reporter Tiffany Hsu: "Agencies are better informed than ever before about consumers, having amassed huge stores of their data. But many of those consumers, especially the affluent young people prized by advertisers, hate ads so much that they are paying to avoid them."

Taking the time to personalize brand communications will be critical for brands who don't want their customers jumping ship to their competitor or putting up ad blockers to keep ads at bay. This can be done myriad ways, from segmented and personalized email campaigns to website experiences that "remember" the user and in turn deliver content based on her interests and stage in the sales funnel.

Marketers who create ads that don't *look* like ads will be able to write the next chapter in the evolution of the customer experience.

3

VIDEO

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

We knew years ago—and shared with you in a similar marketing trends white paper—that video was going to be a must-have for brands rather than a nice-to-have. But today, there are even more ways consumers are watching and interacting with brands through video. This shift in behavior has paved the way for brands to interact with consumers in a way that is more authentic.

According to Insivia, consumers retain 95 percent of content when it is presented via video, compared to just 10 percent retention when reading text. Further, social video gets shared 1,200 percent more than text and images combined, according to Wordstream.

People want authentic content that is multidimensional, which means they are going to user-led platforms like YouTube and TikTok to consume more video content. With more than 1 billion monthly users across the globe who watch almost 5 billion videos every day, YouTube continues to evolve its products and services to meet the needs of today's consumers. In early

November, the video platform launched two new products: shopping ads that allow brands to advertise their products in the home feed and search results when a user searches for similar content; and Super Stickers, where video creator fans can support their favorite creators and videos with colorful “stickers” that cost anywhere from 99 cents to \$50.

Similarly, TikTok has become this year's surprise entry into the unofficial “Taking the World by Storm” category. The app—especially popular with teens and younger adults who like to create and watch short videos usually set to music—has around 800 million global monthly users, according to its own pitch deck. Now with several ad products like brand takeovers and hashtag challenges, TikTok is appealing to brands who want to connect with a younger audience.

4

CONSUMER PRIVACY

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Remember Cambridge Analytica?

Data privacy has been at the center stage ever since the scandal was exposed in early 2018, where it was learned that the British political consulting firm used the personal data of 87 million Facebook users—without their consent—to serve political ads. While the story was first reported in 2015, it wasn't until March 2018 when a whistle-blower emerged. On March 17 of that year, *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* simultaneously went public with the story.

The scandal, as you surely remember, prompted an investigation by the Federal Trade Commission, which prompted Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg to testify before Congress.

Since then, new data privacy initiatives have been put into place, like the General Data Protection Regulation (more commonly referred to as GDPR) that went into effect in May 2018 and, more recently, the California Consumer Privacy Act, which will become effective on Jan. 1, 2020.

As companies are taking more steps and measures to protect their customers' data, we expect to see other regulations take root. Other states, for example, may follow California's lead by introducing their own regulations specific to companies within their state boundaries.

The consumer trust stakes are high, as only 25 percent of consumers believe companies treat their data responsibly, according to PriceWaterhouseCoopers. To combat this, Gartner states that brands that prioritize data privacy by enabling data controls will reduce customer turnover by 40 percent and increase lifetime value by 25 percent by the year 2023.

5

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE... EVERYWHERE

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Artificial intelligence sounds...spooky, like something from another world or reality and something so far beyond comprehension that it can't be real.

But it is, and once you get to know what AI *really* is and how companies are using it today, you may ask yourself, "What took me so long?"

While there are myriad applications for AI that might be applicable to your particular company (hello work process automation), in this white paper we're focusing on the marketing and customer experience applications where we have noticed substantial growth: voice assistance and chatbots.

Are you one of those people who inquire, "Hey, Siri..."? According to eMarketer, almost 34 percent of the U.S. population has used a voice assistant (like Siri, Alexa and others) *at least* monthly in 2019. That amounts to about 112 million Americans and a 9.5 percent increase from 2018.

This trend has a significant positive impact for marketers, and it's only expected to grow. Of those with a smart speaker, 16 percent use their device of choice for voice shopping on a monthly basis, according to Voicebot.ai.

Optimizing your content for voice search will allow consumers to find you quicker when doing in-the-moment searches by voice command.

Another AI application where we are seeing tremendous growth is in chatbots, which give consumers the ability to "speak" with brands in their preferred method. Some experts estimate that 85 percent of brand communications will be through chatbots by 2020. While that may seem high to you, the fact that consumers desire communications on their terms remains unchallenged. As opposed to other methods of customer service, chatbots provide instantaneous assistance. As we move into 2020, we expect chatbots to evolve even further to better understand language and semantics, and will also be able to predict trends in consumer behavior by analyzing previous customer interactions that identify trends and opportunities.

6

ACHIEVING POSITION ZERO

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

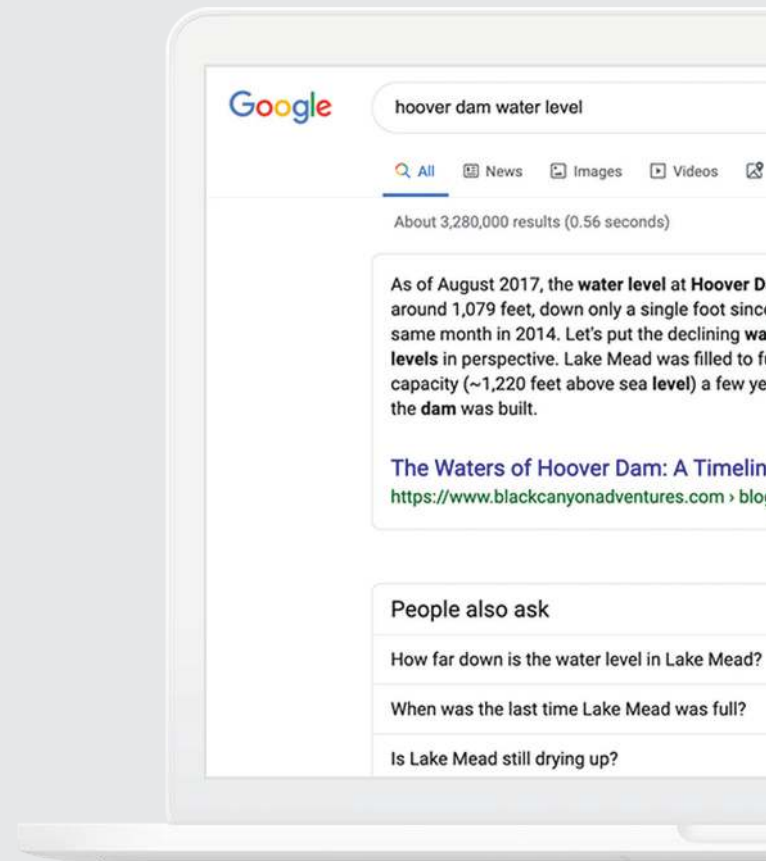
MEDIA

CREATIVE

It's no longer good enough to be the first result when a user makes a search. Today, it's about getting into position ahead of that first result (who even knew there was such a thing?), which means something called Position Zero.

This sought after placement occurs when companies employ schema markups to their content so that it is featured in a call-out box at the top of the page before the list of results. These featured snippets, as they're often referred to, are akin to winning the search lottery.

Think of all the times you've searched Google for answers to your questions, like the world's most popular vacation destinations (Paris tops the list) or the most expensive wine (a bottle of the 1947 Château Cheval Blanc set one collector back \$304,375). Today, instead of sifting through search results to find *exactly* what you were looking for, Google's algorithms have made it easier for users to instantly get the info they need without having to click into a search result at all. Now, you won't see a featured snippet on every search you run—just those with results that have been strategically marked up for first place (or “zero place,” if there was such a thing) exposure.



7

GOOGLE SHOPPING
VS. AMAZON

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Raise your hand if you've ever bought something on Amazon.

Yeah, that's what we thought.

With more than \$230 *billion* in revenue in 2018, it's safe to say consumers love Amazon and use it regularly to make purchases. Where else can you buy a new TV, a pair of fuzzy socks, dog shampoo and a jug of laundry detergent in one trip—and from the comfort of your couch?

Google is trying to break consumers of their Amazon-first shopping habit with Shopping Ads that appear in relevant searches. For example, when I search for black heels, I get Google Shopping ads from shoe retailers with photos of black heels, pricing and click-to-purchase ease. With an estimated 5.6 billion searches per day on Google, it's not too surprising, then, that almost 80 percent of retail search ad spend is through Google Shopping campaigns.

The main difference between Google and Amazon is intent; Amazon shoppers are on Amazon because they intend to purchase, where Google users are typically looking for more information about a product—not necessarily intending to purchase in that very moment.

A mix of Google and Amazon campaigns for retail brands ensures that the brand is visible and present at any point of the customer journey, from awareness to conversion.

8

**MORE SUBSTANTIVE
BLOG CONTENT**

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Is it better to write shorter blogs that can be read quickly and easier to digest, or longer blogs that have a lot of meat and substance?

The answer to that question has seemingly changed over time. Brands have deployed studies to better understand consumer behavior based on a blog's word count, among other factors.

Today, the pendulum is swinging back to longer blogs that cover off on "micro questions" based on a user's initial search. If someone is searching for "top dog breeds," for example, they may now come across a blog that speaks to the most popular dog breeds overall, but would also dig a little deeper to answer any additional questions that could come up, such as what the best dog breeds are for children and seniors, how much food those top breeds eat a day, what kind of health issues are common in the top dog breeds, and even how much money you can expect to shell out to take one of those dogs home.

While there is no clear answer to if people prefer shorter blogs over longer pieces—some argue that consumers have short attention spans and prefer a quick read, while others disagree—it is clear to see that long-format blogs have myriad benefits. More substantive blogs that have a higher relevancy score are more apt to be a featured snippet (that whole "position zero" thing we wrote about a couple pages back) than shorter blogs that don't have a lot of depth.

Just think about your own search habits, behaviors and preferences. Wouldn't you rather read through one longer blog than having to poke around Google to find the five blogs that answer all your "micro" questions?

9

MONETIZATION OF GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Five years ago, Google launched a free platform called Google My Business (GMB for short), which allows users to quickly gather information about a company in a listing format without having to leave Google to go to that company's website.

This platform has grown in prominence over the past few years to become a valuable piece of real estate, as a company's GMB listing gets at least four times as many impressions as your website will get—which could amount to thousands, hundreds of thousands or even *millions* of impressions on your GMB listing, unequivocally making it the most important tool that companies today should prioritize.

Over the past five years, Google has introduced myriad functionalities to the GMB listing that optimize the user experience and make it easier than ever to do virtually everything within the listing itself, such as read customer reviews, see photos, get offers, book a reservation and so much more.

And just a few months ago, Google hinted at potentially monetizing listings. In a survey to select local companies, users were asked how much they would be willing to spend each month for certain features, many of which would be new features like automated review responses and the ability to remove ads from your listing. Google is exploring charging businesses anywhere from \$25 to \$60 per month depending on the option selected, according to this survey.

If this ends up being implemented, it will have a significant impact on what information about a company is provided in the GMB profile when users do a search.

10

ADA-COMPLIANT WEBSITES

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

If you don't think you need to worry about your website, think again.

In just the first six months of 2019, more than 5,500 ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Title III lawsuits were filed—an increase of 12 percent over the same time period the year before.

We're not talking small potato companies that are being targeted, either. We're talking about Beyoncé (yes, *that* Beyoncé), whose company Parkwood Entertainment was a defendant in one such lawsuit earlier this year. And then there was that one pizza company—what was it called...oh yeah, Domino's—that lost a lawsuit appeal earlier this fall when it argued its website isn't "required to be accessible to the disabled." Let's just say the Supreme Court (yes, *that* Supreme Court) did not agree with Domino's' position.

While the Americans with Disabilities Act was introduced more than 30 years ago, it was only within the last couple years that we noticed a rise in lawsuits addressing access issues that were beyond just *physical* barriers. Today, those access issues include websites that aren't built or coded in a way that makes it navigable for anyone. Think audio files that don't have captioning for the hearing impaired or screen reading software for the visually impaired, and so on.

While the prevalence of—and media attention surrounding—these lawsuits has been contained to the past couple years, the Department of Justice has been working on website accessibility guidance since 2003, without much success as it pertains to an official position all companies must adhere to. Today, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (or WCAG) is seen as the standard when it comes to website accessibility best practices.

11

SOCIAL COMMERCE

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Considering the sheer volume of social users worldwide—more than 2.65 billion people, according to Statista—and how much time they spend on social platforms (about two hours and 20 minutes per day, per GlobalWebIndex), it's no surprise the platforms themselves are continuously finding ways to keep users on the platform for as long as possible and to eliminate any friction.

Over the past few years, we have watched as platforms introduced e-commerce capabilities to their users. Most notably is the ability to keep users within the platform itself as they shop and make purchases with the addition of “click to buy” buttons.

It's estimated that U.S. social commerce sales will grow by more than \$60 billion over the next five years, according to Business Intelligence Report—from an estimated \$22 billion in 2019 to \$84 billion in 2024. Today, social commerce represents 3.9 percent of all e-commerce in the United States, which is estimated to double to almost 8 percent in 2024.

Until recently, Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest have led the pack with shoppable posts. Now, TikTok has entered the social commerce space and Snapchat has offered shoppable ads for the past year.

12

MORE STORIES

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

With more than 500 million viewers every *day*, Instagram Stories has grabbed the attention of social users who want to get a little closer to their favorite brands, celebrities and influencers—not to mention their friends and family—via video and photo content strung together into a “story.”

Stories feels more real and authentic for users, who have come to find the feed itself getting more designed and polished. Additionally, Stories gives users more options to be creative through polls, stickers, music and other design elements.

Similarly, Facebook Stories has also gained traction quickly since it was introduced a couple years ago—today amassing 500 million users each day, according to Mark Zuckerberg back in April 2019. And those Story viewers are immersed in the content, more so than a traditional post. In fact, 62 percent of those polled by Marketing Land say they were more interested in a product after seeing it in a Facebook Story.

The appeal of stories in general is the perceived connection it creates between users and brands, personalities, friends and family. The explosion of similar “story” platforms like Snapchat and TikTok certainly reinforces users’ affiliation for real, authentic content that is a lot different from what they are seeing today through other marketing channels.

Plus, the possibilities are endless for how brands can use Stories to their benefit, from product launches to behind-the-scenes content to Stories ads that appear alongside organic Story posts.

13

USER GENERATED
CONTENT

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

If you haven't already noticed a theme with some of the trends we've outlined in this paper, we'll give it to you here: consumers crave real, authentic content from brands.

That's exactly why user-generated content (or UGC) has become increasingly popular with brands over the past several years. With more than 60 million images posted on Instagram every day, UGC has become a cost-effective way to incorporate authentic content into their marketing (with permission, of course).

As we've stated in previous white papers and blog posts, today's consumers gravitate more toward content (photos, videos) that "looks" and feels like them—meaning they can see themselves in the photo of the anonymous young woman wearing a cute denim jacket, probably more so than the photo of a professional model wearing that same jacket.

According to an Offerpop survey, 85 percent of consumers said that UGC was more influential than brand photos or videos, and 93 percent find UGC helpful when making purchase decisions.

One of the best parts about UGC, in our opinion, is that it can be seamlessly incorporated across pretty much any marketing channel, from Instagram ads and digital display to print and outdoor.

14

**COLLABORATIVE
INFLUENCER
ENGAGEMENTS**

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

The influencer train isn't slowing down anytime soon, especially with how influencer engagements have evolved over the past few years that allow for increased collaboration between those influencers and the brands they produce content for.

When influencer marketing first took shape, the inclination was for brands to establish partnerships with those celebrities and personalities that drew the highest number of fans and followers. But consumers, on the other hand, could easily see through the facade if their favorite celebrity started promoting a brand that wasn't aligned with that celeb's own interests.

Today's marketers have learned from the sins of the past and are sure to do their due diligence when researching and partnering with influencers to ensure there is a clear alignment that won't cause confusion or backlash among their core audience.

Additionally, influencers today have more creative control over the brand-influencer relationship, where it has become more of a collaboration than a dictation in terms of the actual content itself as well as how and where it will be shared.

Similar to UGC, influencer content is now being used in integrated marketing campaigns—at some pretty impressive price tags. According to Business Insider Intelligence, more than \$8 billion will be spent on influencer marketing in 2019 and is expected to grow to \$15 billion by 2022. And earlier this year, Instagram made it possible for brands to convert influencers' organic posts into ads—thereby amplifying their content even further.

15

LIVE STREAMING

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

While live streaming isn't anything new, what *is* new is how these videos look.

Today, they're more produced than ever before as brands are becoming more comfortable with executions like Facebook Live, Instagram Live and even Instagram TV (IGTV). Live streaming allows brands to get "up close and personal" with their fans while also managing to be both professional *and* sincere.

There were 3.5 billion Facebook Live events produced in 2018 alone, and Sprout Social reports that 100 million Instagram users watch or record Live video every day. Yes, every *day*.

Considering the amount of live videos on these platforms alone, brands are finding they have to get creative with each production in order to stand apart from a sea of the same.

Multi-camera and multi-host live streams are gaining traction, and some brands are starting to incorporate other creative effects into their productions to make them pop.

If you're asking yourself why you should consider investing precious time and resources into live streaming, consider this: the average Facebook Live engagement was 178 percent higher than the average Facebook post engagement, according to Search Engine Journal.

16

**PERSONAL,
INTERACTIVE TV**

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Imagine a world where brands could serve up personalized TV commercials that are based on the demographics of the viewer watching their favorite program.

In other words, your neighbor might be served one commercial and you would see a totally different commercial during the same commercial break. How, you might ask? Because of connected TV (or CTV) and the technology's ability to pull in so much data about those households that subscribe to streaming services like Hulu and Roku.

Wouldn't you be more inclined to watch a commercial if it was something you were interested in than the laundry detergent commercial that *everyone* is suffering through at that very moment?

This new technology, called addressable advertising, has the ability to know your interests and then deliver ads to you that will resonate with you on a deeper level. Marketers using this technology, furthermore, are eliminating wasted impressions by not serving ads to people who might not be in the market for a new car, for instance.

With consumers craving more personalized and authentic experiences from brands, it seems like addressable TV will naturally become more widely adopted by marketers who want to connect with consumers on a deeper level.

17

PODCAST ADVERTISING

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

If you're one of the 165 million Americans who have listened to a podcast, you're in good company.

With more than 750,000 active podcasts covering virtually every topic imaginable (who *doesn't* want to listen to the unusual history of gnomes?), marketers have a virtual direct line to podcast listeners, who make up 51 percent of the total U.S. population.

According to Statista, podcast advertising in the United States is projected to reach more than *half a billion dollars* (\$534 million to be exact) by 2020.

Why are marketers so attracted to this channel? For one, podcast listeners tend to fully immerse themselves into the podcast they are listening to—including the advertisements themselves. Edison research shows that 65 percent of podcast listeners tune in to their favorite podcast in the car, where there are typically little to no other distractions to compete with. They're more inclined to listen to an ad and have higher brand recall afterward. In fact, 80 percent of podcast listeners can

name at least one brand that advertised in a podcast episode unaided (according to Midroll), whereas the recall with other ad formats like digital banners and native ads are considerably less (33 percent for web banners and just 7.3 percent for native ads), according to Digiday.

While many podcast ads are part of the podcast episode itself, dynamic ad placement is paving the way for advertisers to run much more targeted and relevant campaigns. This programmatic approach enables advertisers to serve ads to listeners based on a number of filters including geography, daypart and other criteria. If you're a restaurant chain in Arizona promoting a new breakfast option, for example, your ads would be served to listeners only in Arizona listening during the morning hours.

With so many options for dynamic ad placement, we're excited to watch this emerging trend continue to captivate millions of podcast enthusiasts every day.

18

PSYCHOGRAPHIC
TARGETING

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Imagine hearing or seeing an ad at the very moment you needed that message.

You're driving to work when—mid-yawn—you hear a radio ad from a large coffee retailer promoting a new seasonal blend.

Or you're scrolling through your Facebook feed during your lunch break and see an ad promoting your bucket list travel destination, just when you were thinking about booking your epic summer trip.

You may start noticing this sensory-centric media targeting approach, where advertisers are buying space based on mood or moments.

The practice is somewhat controversial and Big Brother-y to some. This initiative was piloted in 2018 by *The New York Times* through its “Project Feels” ad placement technology, where it says it can target ads based on readers’ moods or inclinations. ESPN, for example, has reported it can buy ads based on whether a fan’s favorite team is winning or losing.

To better explain, we went to the Poynter Institute to find out more:

To take an example of what the Times more formally is calling “perspective targeting,” an interview/profile of Cher was determined to put the reader into an inspired, amused and adventurous mood. Should those feelings be a fit to an advertiser’s pitch, a placement automatically drops into the digital edition of the story.

Okaaaaayyyy...

The approach behind Project Feels is fascinating—including the categorization of 18 emotions and 150,000 data points. It will be downright fascinating to watch how this new approach takes shape—and how consumers will feel about it.

19

LOGO SYSTEMS

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

By now you have likely seen Facebook's new logo "family" that puts the Facebook mark on its collection of products, like WhatsApp and Instagram.

Now, logo families are nothing new. But as we see more companies (like Facebook) making acquisitions or adding new products and services that appeal to consumers, we anticipate seeing more brands developing logo families with a clearly-defined common element that is woven throughout as a common thread.

Brands like Adobe, USA Today, Microsoft and others have mastered this approach, where its various products are given their own identity but clearly belong under the same umbrella.

FACEBOOK
FACEBOOK
FACEBOOK



20

INTERACTIVE CONTENT

OVERARCHING

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

MEDIA

CREATIVE

Considering how many ads consumers are exposed to each day—most estimates are comfortably around 5,000 a day—advertisers have a tough job ahead: how to break through All That Clutter.

Wait, 5,000 ads a *day*? How could that be?

Think about all the times you're on Facebook (don't worry, your secret's safe with us), scrolling through your LinkedIn feed, mindlessly watching (or listening to) commercials on TV, listening to the radio on your way to work and seeing all those digital ads each day at work when you're online. It starts to add up, and fast.

When you take into consideration consumers' (shorter) attention spans coupled with their desire for *less* marketing and *more* reality, it's become even more important than ever to create brand communications that are interactive and engaging.

The beauty of the world we live in today—a blend of the traditional and digital—is that we can be incredibly creative in our approach, so that consumers feel compelled to pause for a few seconds, a minute even, and soak it in.

We have seen incredibly creative executions in the traditional space, with the clear intention to capture the attention of consumers. Coca-Cola, for one, launched a recycling campaign in Europe that used its logo to literally point to recycling bins situated at the base of billboards and other out-of-home installations.

In another example of creativity bridging the gap between digital and traditional, consumers who approach a freezer or cooler door at their local grocer may soon begin to see digital ads and other product information that projects on the door itself. A startup called Cooler Screens is piloting this initiative that uses eye tracking and other technology to understand the consumer standing in front of the cooler door, and may be able to serve messaging based on what product that person is eyeing in the case.

And a print ad from IKEA using medical technology prompted women to “pee on this ad” to find out if they were pregnant. If they were, IKEA would extend a discount on its line of cribs.

With the stakes so high, it's clear that advertisers are having to get more creative to capture the attention of consumers and create some major buzz that breaks through all the advertising clutter.



CONCLUSION



While this list of 20 marketing trends shaping the industry is not “the official list” by any means, it is inclusive of some of the major trends our team of experts is following.

And considering the speed at which this industry evolves, it’s likely that a new crop of trends will be on our radar by the time this paper has reached you.

If anything, we hope our list has inspired you to think about all the possibilities when it comes to reaching your target audience. As you can clearly see, the possibilities are limitless and can go as far as our imaginations are brave enough to take us.

