

Cutting Edge: Our weekly analysis of marketing news

7 October 2020

Welcome to our weekly analysis of the most useful marketing news for CIM members.

Quick [links](#) to sections

Marketing trends and issues

Advertising

Space – the final frontier for advertising?

Astronauts on the International Space Station are to be paid \$17,500 an hour by Estée Lauder to take photos of the company's Advanced Night Repair serum. Apart from the amazing location, there is the advantage of having no coronavirus on the space station because the astronauts are already self-isolating. The downside is that the videos and photos can only be used on social media rather than in print or on TV. NASA plans to use up to 5% of astronaut time for commercial ventures in the future. But who regulates advertising in space, bearing in mind that the ASA, for example, regulates advertising on domestic plane flights but not on international ones? Could there be a "planet of origin" principle applied here? Nevertheless, the idea of advertising in space offers some interesting possibilities for branding...

[mondaq.com](#), 28 September 2020 (Dresden)

Ad production exempt from quarantine

The UK Government has exempted commercials from the law that requires people coming into the UK to quarantine for 14 days. This means that directors, photographers and artists coming into the UK for a production can go straight to a shoot upon arrival without self-isolating. The Advertising Producers Association (APA) says this could help to attract productions from the US and elsewhere. It has produced an advice note entitled: *Travelling to the UK to work on a Commercials Production During Covid-19: Self-isolation exemptions guidance*.

[a-p-a.net](#), 28 September 2020;

<https://www.a-p-a.net/2020/09/news/self-isolation-exemptions-guidance/>

Agencies

Working from home – the end of your career?

Working from home (WFH) can mean missed learning opportunities, especially for younger workers. Almost 40,000 job losses are expected among marketers, according to CIM research, with agencies admitting that job losses are inevitable. Many agency workers are still receiving a reduced salary and the Government's U-turn on returning to the office has scuppered any chance of people returning to normal careers. For young people especially, WFH means missing out on learning and development, with many saying they learn by being in the office and observing others at work. Adam & Eve/DDB says younger people are able to be involved in more calls with senior people than they would normally. Meanwhile, M&C Saatchi has introduced a free virtual training programme called Open Blend. This article also covers the topic of WFH burnout and offers tips for keeping your career alive while working from home.

[campaignlive.co.uk](#), 2 October 2020 (Small)

Brands and branding

UK brands in decline – Kantar BrandZ

The value of UK brands has fallen significantly this year as UK brands fail to keep up with those in other countries. The annual BrandZ ranking from Kantar reveals that UK brand value has fallen by 13% over the past 12 months and 15% since 2017. Kantar warns that UK brands might disappear from the top 100 global brands by 2024. Vodafone, the UK's biggest brand with a value of \$23.1 billion, has lost 13% in value over the past year, placing it at number 55. HSBC is second among UK brands, followed by Shell, BP and BT. This year's list has been affected by the coronavirus, with entertainment, food and drink and personal care brands enjoying rising values, while retail, cars and



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luxury brand values have declined. The report concludes that only those brands that can anticipate change and adapt to changing consumer behaviour will hold their value in these difficult times. Companies need to innovate and invest says Kantar. [marketingweek.com](https://www.marketingweek.com), 29 September 2020 (Barker)

Children

Children's views on well-being

From September 2019 to February 2020, ONS researchers conducted focus groups among children aged ten to 15 to discover their views on well-being and what made them happy. The findings reveal the importance of feeling loved and having positive, supportive relationships; of feeling safe and having safe places to meet friends; being themselves without being judged; the impact of school; and the need to live in a country at peace where children's needs are considered. Although the research was conducted before the pandemic, the findings could be of value in knowing how to support children.

ons.gov.uk, 2 October 2020 (Jordan and Rees); <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/childrensviewsonwellbeingandwhatmakesahappylifeuk2020/2020-10-02>

Conferences and events

Virtual conferences and how to improve them

In some ways online meetings and video calls have improved meeting environments by bringing people closer to colleagues. However, live events – important for community building, product launches, training and new sales – have taken a hit. They are hard to replicate online for reasons including the fact that few allow attendees to engage with each other or with the speakers. Digital events often have high registration numbers but the level of engagement can fall by up to 33% in the first half-hour and over 71% in the first hour, according to recent surveys by Constellation Research. Here are five strategies for addressing the shortcomings of online conferences.

[CRM Magazine](https://www.crm-magazine.com), Vol 24(8), October 2020, p6 (Wang)

Creating a successful webinar

Many marketers are turning to webinars which, because of their educational format, have certain advantages. For one thing, they can build credibility because a brand can host a webinar on a subject in which they have expertise. Webinars can also allow fans to interact with the brand digitally. Webinar signups can provide a longer contact list, more prospects and purchasing conversions. But getting viewers to sign up and remember to attend requires "clever" marketing and there are plenty of competitors who may be holding similar events. The author surveyed 400 consumers about their webinar preferences and what motivates them to attend such events. She sets out some key findings for developing and promoting webinar content.

blog.hubspot.com, 30 September 2020 (Bump)

Consumer behaviour

Going beyond assumption

In his series entitled *The Seven Deadly Sins of Customer Motivation*, the author examines problems that companies face with their data management capabilities which can hinder their ability to understand and motivate their customers. This in turn can damage loyalty and the bottom line. This article focuses on the sin of assumption: some organisations ignore data-driven intelligence and instead assume that they know how customers behave and interact with the brand, relying either on previous experience or gut instinct. Making an assumption is the easiest option while data-driven decisions involve investment and resources. Moving away from assumption means an organisation-wide commitment to evidence-based decisions so that one's understanding of the customer is based on fact, not surmise.

[researchworld.com](https://www.researchworld.com), 29 September 2020 (Beale)

Upper income groups are worriers

The pandemic has made economic inequality worse but people higher up the income scale have started to worry about their finances as much as those lower down the scale. A pre-pandemic study by Kantar Financial Services found 42% of respondents (both below and above the \$100,000-income bracket) feeling stressed about money. One of the latest Harris Polls, held in August, found that 30% of those in the \$100,000-plus bracket were "very concerned" about losing their job vs 27% in the under-\$50,000s. This was matched by a July poll from *The Economist* and YouGov where respondents in the \$100,000-plus bracket were the most likely to be "very worried" about losing their job. These findings are important to marketers since consumers' financial worries will influence their behaviour.

[emarketer.com](https://www.emarketer.com), 2 October 2020 (Dolliver)

Customer relations

Customer service on its own is not enough

When trying to attract loyalty, most organisations focus on improving the customer service experience but this isn't enough to improve loyalty, according to new research from Gartner. "At best, a great customer service experience can only mitigate disloyalty, not make customers more loyal", says Brent Adamson VP of Gartner's Customer Service and Support Practice. Businesses should also focus on building positive word-of-mouth and share of wallet as well as helping customers to derive more value from their products and services. Customers should believe they have made a "world-class purchase decision", according to Gartner's Jeffrey Schott. The more confident the customer is in their purchase decision, the more they are likely to buy other products and provide positive WoM.

[CRM Magazine](https://www.crm-magazine.com), Vol 24(8), October 2020, p12 (Britt)

Direct marketing

Does time personalisation boost response?

Does timing enhance personalisation, message impact and response rate? In this study the aim was to discover whether the use of marketing automation using transaction recency (compared to a mass-market approach) increased the response rate. To answer this, a direct mail study was carried out among employees of nine financial institutions. The findings revealed a "statistically" significant relationship between time personalisation and consumer response. The findings have implications for marketers for increasing customer engagement and brand affinity while using marketing automation tools.

Journal of Brand Strategy, Vol 9(2), Autumn 2020, pp143-151 (Rizzo)

Law

Targeting social media users

The European Data Protection Board (EDPB) has recently adopted draft guidelines for the targeting of social media users. It aims to set out the roles and responsibilities of social media providers and "targeters" in terms of processing personal data for targeting. The Guidelines state that the mechanisms used to target users may pose a risk to them and raise particular concerns when it comes to children. This article looks at the "actors" in the targeting process as identified by the guidelines and sets out how social media providers and targeters can target users based on provided, observed and inferred data. The guidelines are open for public consultation until 19 October.

lexology.com, 29 September 2020 (Cooper);
https://edpb.europa.eu/our-work-tools/public-consultations-art-704/2020/quidelines-082020-targeting-social-media-users_en

Marketing

How to develop a marketing hook

One of the hardest jobs in marketing is to attract the attention of your audience and the best way to do this is to use a marketing "hook". A hook is defined as an aspect of content and advertising that grabs people's attention. This should not be confused with the unique selling points (USPs) of a product or service. Every business, even an established one, needs a hook for any piece of content or promotion. In order to compete effectively, a marketing hook needs to follow at least one of these rules: be different; have a polarising message; reject conformity; be authentic. Here are three techniques to help you develop an "attention-grabbing" hook.

einsteinmarketer.com, 25 September 2020 (Barney)

How marketing leaders responded to Covid-19

The coronavirus and the accompanying economic crises have tested leaders' ability to understand and respond to changes in their internal and external

environments. McKinsey asked eight European executives from the Marketing Academy fellowship to share their experiences of leadership during the pandemic. Three main strands of thought are identified: focusing on the human element, such as prioritising employee challenges and communicating effectively; acting boldly and decisively for rapid revenue recovery; and laying the foundations for future growth. Examples of how company leaders reacted in various situations are described.

mckinsey.com, 29 September 2020 (Joseph et al)

B2B marketing – reflect the buyer's journey

Many B2B purchases are controlled by a team of people for each account. Yet, the amount of time a buyer spends with a sales rep may be just 5% to 6% of the buying cycle, according to Gartner. Therefore, it is contingent upon marketing to generate 17 to 20 touchpoints in the customer's buying journey and to develop a connection with the customer. The problem is that some marketing still adheres to outdated organisational and engagement models. It delivers campaigns that are aligned with how the marketing organisation works, rather than across channels; but it should be factoring in how accounts buy and buyers make decisions. A siloed marketing organisation can't connect to buyers across all the channels they are using. CMOs and B2B marketers are beginning to reduce "push" marketing in favour of "pull" marketing. Here is some advice to help marketing align with the way B2B buyers make their decisions.

marketingland.com, 25 September 2020 (Vaughan)

When empathy meets technology

Empathy has played an increasingly important role in marketing over the past few years but understanding how empathy intersects with technology, especially in the sphere of social media, is a largely uncharted area. This article examines how marketers can steer an ethical course towards understanding consumer needs through the use of technology. It covers feminism and self-worth and the question of creating something more meaningful on social media. It advises marketers to, "educate themselves in the neurological, sociocultural and political ramifications" of technology and social media.

ama.org, 28 September 2020 (Murtell)

Market research

Adapting Census 2021

In less than six months' time people in England and Wales will take part in Census 2021, run by the ONS. The census is held once every decade to provide a picture of people and communities in the two nations. In this blog, Ian Bell, deputy national statistician at the ONS, explains how this vast piece of research is being planned and adapted to changes brought about by coronavirus. At the centre

of the design is “maximising response and minimising undercounts”, he explains.

blog.ons.gov.uk, 1 October 2020 (Bell)

Market research should look to the long-term

A webinar, which focused on the recent *Fast-forwarding research: How Covid-19 has reset the customer insight function* report by MRS Delphi Group, warned against “short-term thinking”. It advised the sector to focus on deeper thinking and longer-term behaviour change if it is to remain relevant after the pandemic. Rhea Fox, head of marketing strategy and insight at Aviva, said that qualitative research would be important to distinguish temporary behaviour changes, caused by the lockdown, from more lasting changes to society. Insight companies should move away from quick surveys designed to attract the media.

research-live.com, 30 September 2020 (Kay);
<https://www.mrs.org.uk/campaign/video/fast-forwarding-research?MKTG=FAST>

Public relations

Government comms – MoD out ahead

The UK’s Ministry of Defence has a bigger comms team than any other government department, with almost 540 people occupying comms roles. This is more than double that of the Ministry of Justice, with 250 people. Other departments with big comms teams are: DEFRA (240 people), the DfE (200) and the Home Office (190). This article examines the statistics for government comms departments, setting out data on the number of personnel by department, the top five by headcount and comms personnel for 39 government agencies. It also looks at figures for salaries and wage bills and considers the prospect of impending government cuts.

prweek.com, 30 September 2020 (Griggs)

Sponsorship

Nike is most marketed brand in sport

Nike is the most marketed brand in international sport, according to SportsPro’s ranking of the *World’s 50 Most Marketed Brands*. Currently promoted by over 11,000 athletes and sports organisations around the world, Nike has received the most value, “of any entity invested in sports sponsorship”. Emirates is ranked in second place, followed by Adidas, Monster Energy and Red Bull. The list has been compiled by tracking the activity of over 500,000 social media accounts of major professional athletes, teams and leagues for brand promotion.

sportspromedia.com, 5 October 2020

Agriculture, fishing and forestry

Rule of six will affect turkey sales

The rule that only six people are allowed to gather means that smaller turkeys will be required for Christmas dinner this year. Because it is too late to produce smaller birds, farmers are coming up with innovative ways to offset the reduced demand for large birds, such as limiting their food rations. Richard Griffiths, CEO of the British Poultry Association, has suggested that farmers slaughter the turkeys early and then freeze them. The turkey industry has seen a decline in demand over past years: in 2003 22m birds were consumed but last year the number was just 14m.

thetimes.co.uk, 4 October 2020 (Tucker)

The UK’s first cow poo fuel station

A farm in Buckinghamshire is the first to create a “fuel station” that makes cow manure into biofuel for powering dairy delivery trucks. In a three-month trial, manure from 500 cows will be used to create 27,000kg of biofuel. The initiative is part of a sustainability drive by farm co-operative Arla to reduce its carbon footprint by 80 tonnes. It becomes the first UK dairy business to use waste from its own farms to power its own fleet. Two special tankers adapted to run on biofuel, carry the message: “A cow poo powered milk tanker. Not to be sniffed at”!

farminguk.com, 2 October 2020

Building industry

BIG plans for moon habitation

NASA has announced that a crewed mission will land on the Moon by 2024 while “sustained lunar exploration” will be possible by 2030. This will require habitable buildings on the Moon. NASA is funding Icon, a construction tech start-up which has developed a 3D printer that can construct housing at scale. Icon has partnered with architecture firms, including Bjaerke Ingels Group (BIG), which has developed donut-shaped igloos designed to be built using Icon’s printing technology. The moon-based printer will operate autonomously, creating all structures using remote instructions from another base or even Earth. BIG’s designs for the moon may even have an impact on Earth’s architecture, suggests Icon CEO Jason Ballard.

fastcompany.com, 1 October 2020 (Berg)

Businesses and strategy

Reinventing sales models – the domino effect

As customers shift to digital engagement, sales people are left with more channels to deal with and more interactions to manage. The pandemic has intensified these challenges by showing up the weaknesses in existing sales models. Some sales

organisations are approaching the situation scientifically by using data in ways that produce double-digit growth in ROI. There are four “dominos” that can trigger a chain reaction for dramatically improving sales ROI. These are explained together with some key questions to help leaders begin their discussions.

mckinsey.com, 1 October 2020 (Chappuis et al)

Don't get disrupted

Business leaders want to be disruptive: to challenge larger players through a mix of innovative technology and new business models. But what happens if it is they who are being disrupted? Disruption comes, “from the corners leaders aren't looking at” and from companies that are considered to be outside the industry. Leaders must identify the vulnerable areas within their organisations or risk leaving them open to disruption. Here are three things leaders most often overlook but which they must keep to the fore if they want to defend their company.

Entrepreneur, Vol 48(6), October-November 2020, pp20-22 (Mudassir)

Stand-up for shorter meetings

Julian Hearn, an ex-marketer of Starbucks, Tesco and Waitrose, set up Huel in 2015 as a manufacturer of sustainable plant-based meal replacement products. Within four years the business was worth £220m and it turned over £72m last year alone. Hearn says that the secret to success is to think and act fast but this is not always possible if you are stuck in tedious meetings. His answer is to have stand-up meetings, a trick he learnt while at Tesco. Nobody wants to stand around for too long so the meeting becomes shorter. Standing up also takes up less space in the office!

managementtoday.co.uk, 30 September 2020 (Jones)

People analytics

Most large organisations have people analytics teams, with 70% of company executives citing people analytics as a top priority. Despite this intense interest in better data management, many companies still have a long way to go and face obstacles in the early stages of building their people analytics capabilities. The situation has been exacerbated by the fragmented HR tech landscape. The authors visualise the growth trajectory of a people analytics team in the form of a stairway with five steps. They then explain six best-in-class ingredients for success based on their discussions with 12 people analytics teams from a variety of sectors.

mckinsey.com, 2 October 2020 (Ledet et al)

Charities and NGOs

Step-by-step guide to marketing

A good marketing campaign requires effort from different charity teams. This eight-step guide helps you plan your first digital charity campaign, from defining your digital goals and identifying the audience, through to gathering and reporting your results.

charitydigital.org.uk, 24 September 2020 (Chiu)

Red noses to be plastic-free

Red Nose Day 2021 is to switch to plastic-free red noses after receiving letters from hundreds of children. Pupils at Furlanesend Community Primary School in Cornwall had written to Sir David Attenborough, who said they were “perfectly correct” in “the question of replacing plastic products wherever we can”. Richard Curtis of Comic Relief said the charity had been considering the issue for some time. The new noses will be made from bagasse, a by-product of sugar cane.

bbc.co.uk/news, 6 October 2020

How the NSPCC worked around the pandemic

When the coronavirus hit, instead of furloughing its marketing and comms team, the NSPCC kept most of them working. This is “because we knew this was a time we needed to be seen and heard more”, says David Hamilton, director of comms and marketing. This placed the NSPCC in a good position as it launched its “Still Here” campaign during lockdown and it is now pursuing the “Still Here Frontline” campaign. During the ongoing crisis, marketing has helped the charity to strike a balance between raising awareness of purpose and promoting the cause, so that people want to support it, says Hamilton. The next challenge will be Christmas...

marketingweek.com, 2 October 2020 (Vizard)

Economy

Prices down but threat of no-deal Brexit

The British Retail Consortium's shop price index for September shows that prices decreased by 1.6%, more than the usual 12-month decline of 1.1% but better than the six-month average of 1.7%. Retailers have been cutting prices to encourage more spending, with September seeing the lowest rate of fresh food inflation since 2017, according to Helen Dickinson, BRC's CEO. Without a zero-tariff Brexit deal, supermarkets will incur £3.1 billion a year in tariffs on food and drink, which they will pass on to customers, warns Dickinson.

marketingweek.com, 30 September 2020

International GDP comparisons and forecasts

This House of Commons Library bulletin, *GDP – International Comparisons: Key Economic Indicators* – provides international comparisons for GDP as well

as forecasts for the UK and the world's largest economies. It reports that UK GDP fell by 19.2% in Q2 2020 compared with the previous quarter. This compares with Eurozone GDP, which fell by 11.8% and US GDP, which was down by 9%. The OECD's latest forecasts published on 16 September, show a significant contraction in the world economy due to the pandemic. It expects UK GDP to decline by 10.1% this year but to grow by 7.6% next year. The article offers links through to the cited sources.

commonslibrary.parliament.uk, 2 October 2020 (Harari)

Education

Call for Government to act on EU students

EU students make up around a third of the 450,000 overseas students who come to study at UK universities every year. From 1 January 2021, a new points-based immigration system is likely to result in a decline in the number of European students coming to the UK. In fact, even before the pandemic, the UK Government had predicted an estimated 20% fall in numbers. Universities UK has welcomed recent commitments to improve the prospects for international students in the UK but believes many could still be lost to global competition unless immediate action is taken. It has outlined five measures that policymakers can take to help stabilise the situation.

universities.ac.uk, 5 October 2020

New scheme offers coaching to jobseekers

The Government is launching a Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS) scheme for those who have been out of work for three months due to the pandemic. September's data indicated that UK unemployment had reached its highest level for two years, especially among young people. The Department for Work and Pensions says it will recruit an extra 13,500 "work coaches" to support the JETS scheme. Coaching and advice will be offered to adults over 25 to learn how their skills, "can be used in different parts of the economy". Labour has criticised the scheme as offering "too little too late".

bbc.co.uk/news, 5 October 2020

Energy and utilities

BEIS targets landlords for energy efficiency

The Government has just published new proposals for private landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their rented properties. This comes at the same time as its Green Home Grant (GHG) scheme goes live. Homeowners and landlords can apply for GHGs up to £5,000 to improve energy efficiency and upgrade to low carbon heat. The consultation paper for landlords, issued by the department for BEIS, says that private rental properties must comply with Energy Performance Certificate Band B and C standard by 2028 at the latest. The target is for all "fuel poor" households to

be living in B and C properties by 2030.

utilityweek.co.uk, 30 September 2020

Centrica launches renewable energy brand

Centrica has launched British Gas Evolve, touted as a low-cost "hassle-free" brand. It will initially supply 100% renewable energy to a limited number of customers, with a full launch later in the year. Eventually it plans to launch additional services to help people to reduce their carbon footprint.

energylivenews.com, 6 October 2020 (Mavrokefalidis)

Environment

Environmental "Impact Receipt"

Asket, a Swedish menswear brand, has created a new type of till receipt to highlight its environmental impact. The "Impact Receipt" will break down and itemise the environmental impact of every garment in the collection, including information on CO₂ emissions, water used and energy consumed. It contains the message: "Know your impact, buy less, keep it longer" with a space for a customer signature acknowledging that they are aware of the impact of their choice. Asket says the launch of the receipt is part of its journey towards "full transparency" consisting of "Price, Origin and Impact". It comes at a time when consumers are increasingly aware of the "far-reaching effects that fashion has on the environment", says Asket.

fashionunited.uk, 28 September 2020 (Wightman-Stone)

Climate Change stamps to raise awareness

A set of stamps commissioned by the Finnish Post have been created to convey a powerful message about climate change. Designed by the Berry Creative studio, the Climate Change Stamps feature images of birds, immigrants and snow clouds that turn into skeletons and thunderstorms when heated. The images, which are printed as black silhouettes against coloured backgrounds using heat-reactive ink, change when a finger is rubbed across them. The stamps will be sent on letters and parcels around Finland as a way of encouraging people to reduce their impact on the environment.

dezeen.com, 29 September 2020 (Hitti)

M&S removes soya from milk supply chain

On 1 October M&S finally eliminated soya from its milk supply chain as part of its drive to reduce deforestation in the production of its products. This follows work with 44 British farmers who produce RSPCA Assured milk and have introduced soya alternatives, such as rapeseed oil and sugar beet, into their animal feeds. M&S will also ensure that by the end of the year, all the soya used from its products is sourced through recognised schemes such as the Round Table for Responsible Soy and Proterra.

thegrocer.co.uk, 30 September 2020 (White)

Fashion

M&S to sell eco-brand online

Marks & Spencer has started to sell third-party "guest" brands, online and in its largest stores, in a new move aimed at attracting a wider audience. It has just announced that it will be selling Nobody's Child, an independent eco-fashion brand which sells dresses made from recycled polyester and sustainably sourced viscose.

marketingweek.com, 2 October 2020

Mulberry losses up but online sales are upbeat

British luxury brand Mulberry has seen revenues fall by 10% in the year ending March 2020 with losses before tax reaching £14m. It warns that "alarmingly low levels of footfall" in city centres and the lack of wealthy tourists, especially those from China, the Middle East and the US, will continue to affect sales. Fashion retailers at all ends of the spectrum have been suffering from people's reluctance to visit physical stores. However, Mulberry CEO, Thierry Andretta, says that the company's online strategy is ahead of its rivals. Its digital sales rose by 69% in the six months to the end of September, but in general the luxury market has been struggling to get consumers to buy expensive items online.

ft.com, 5 October 2020 (Nilsson)

Financial services

The future of financial services

In a new paper, *Securing your tomorrow, today. The future of financial services*, PwC examines some of the trends affecting the industry and their impact on particular segments. It points out that, although the pandemic presents major challenges, other factors (geopolitical tensions and changing regulatory regimes) will impact financial institutions in the mid-to long-term. There are seven macro trends that financial services leaders should understand so that they can plan for the future. There are also new ways that they should be thinking about business. Four areas – repair, rethink, reconfigure and report – are identified as foci for recovery in financial services.

pwc.com, October 2020

Palm-scanning payments

Amazon is trialling a system that allows people to pay using the palm of their hand. Amazon One, currently being tested in two of its Amazon Go stores in Seattle, uses palm imagery in a similar way to fingerprint technology. Amazon wants to extend use of the technology to "most retail environments" where it could act as an alternative payment or loyalty card. It could also be used as a badging system in workplaces or when entering a sports stadium, for example.

nfcw.com, 29 September 2020 (Phillips)

FMCG

Beverages

When is gin not gin?

The Pentone Family, a spirits maker, has been forced to withdraw two drinks from the market after The Gin Guild threatened legal action. It will also remove all mentions of gin from its website. Gin must contain at least 37.5% alcohol by volume in order to be compliant, but Pentone had labelled two of its drinks as gin even though they were only 29% ABV. The Gin Guild said that the production, marketing and sales of 29% spirit was an attempt to, "leech on the name and reputation of the gin category".

thegrocer.co.uk, 29 September 2020 (Woolfson)

Food

Deforestation – be tougher say companies

Twenty-one big UK food brands are calling on the Government to be tougher about deforestation. The Government has proposed a ban on produce from illegal deforested land but the food companies, which include McDonald's and Unilever, want the ban to apply to all deforestation. The ban only applies to larger companies, which means that medium-sized enterprises can continue importing produce from land created by forest clearance. A recent survey by WWF found that 67% of British consumers would like the Government to do more to tackle the issue.

thedrum.com, 5 October 2020 (Glenday)

Food and drink calendars

This year's Advent calendars have started to arrive. *The Grocer* reviews some of the options that could make December a bit more exciting. This year it's not all about chocolate as evidenced by the Friends (named after the sitcom) coffee calendar containing 24 Nespresso-compatible coffee capsules in festive flavours; a Vegan Gourmet Popcorn calendar; a Clipper calendar, offering 24 tea bags; "the ultimate BrewDog beer sampler" calendar, complete with 24 cans of beer; and Phillip Scofield's craft gin calendar, containing miniature bottles of gin.

thegrocer.co.uk, 5 October 2020 (Maynard)

Government and public sector

Automation for customer experience

The authors argue that governments can offer "outstanding" levels of customer experience with the smart use of automation and that such innovations can even be sensitive to people's feelings. This article starts by looking at the challenges and rewards for governments of improving customer experience; discusses the benefits to governments

of using automation to enhance that experience; and then identifies three practices for successful automation. These are: viewing automation as an end-to-end customer journey; focusing on the drivers of satisfaction (simplicity, reliability and consistency); and investing deeply in change management.

mckinsey.com, 28 September 2020 (Daub et al)

Facebook extends ban on political advertising

Facebook has extended its ban on certain categories of political advertising in the US, to include those that aim to “delegitimise any lawful method or process of voting”, including claims that postal voting could encourage fraud. It has also removed all ads sponsored by the Trump campaign which claim that refugees could increase the risk of coronavirus.

bbc.co.uk/news, 1 October 2020

Health and pharmaceuticals

VR – a new device?

Virtual reality is increasingly being used in a medical environment. The Bravemind system, developed in 2005 by medical VR experts at the University of Southern California, was used to treat soldiers returning from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It builds on exposure therapy where people are brought face-to-face with their fears in a controlled way. VR has allowed psychologists and neuroscientists to study people’s cognitive and emotional responses which has led to the treatment of phobias. Virtual environments also allow doctors and dentists to practise important procedures in a risk-free way. Medical uses for computer simulations are promising but will require clinical trials, as well as frameworks for data protection, and for technologies that have the potential to become a new type of medical device.

economist.com, Technology Quarterly, 1 October 2020

IT and telecoms

Wearables market – a positive outlook

Global shipments of wearable devices are set to reach 396m units this year and 637.1m by 2024, according to IDC. The health and fitness sector continues to dominate the market but almost half of volume shipments are expected to support contactless payments by the end of the year. IDC says that 2020 has been positive for wearables despite the pandemic. Key trends include: the growth in ear-worn hearable devices and the emergence of data collected from the wearable device, which can connect users with guidance, such as fitness workouts, coaching and dietary advice. The use of multiple wearables which can be used in conjunction with each other is also expected to help drive growth.

nfcw.com, 2 October 2020 (Phillips)

Samsung makes 5G inroads

Samsung, which has for years lagged behind its competitors in the network business, is making inroads into 5G at the same time as governments remove Huawei from their networks. In September Samsung sealed a deal with Verizon to supply it with 5G radio access equipment; this could be a game changer, according to 5G expert Stefan Pongratz. Although Huawei, Ericsson and Nokia still dominate the global network equipment market with 70% to 80% share, Samsung’s share has doubled over the past two years to about 3% but in 5G mobile infrastructure, it has reached 10% to 15% share. This article, which includes some useful graphs, considers Samsung’s 5G opportunity and looks at markets, such as Africa, where it might be hard to compete with Huawei.

ft.com, 4 October 2020 (White)

Smart speaker ads more engaging

During the pandemic, US consumers have been using their smart speakers more. They have even been listening to more ads on them, which has, rather surprisingly, proved to be a positive thing. In fact, 51% of consumers who own smart speakers recall hearing ads on them, up from 25% in May 2019, according to a survey from Adobe Digital Insights; 52% said they found smart speaker ads to be more engaging than other formats (TV, print, online and social), up from 42% in 2019. Some 57% also said the ads were more relevant than for other formats.

Adweek, Vol61(20), 28 September 2020, p3 (Lacy)

Leisure and tourism

A lack of experience

The experience industry has seen significant growth over recent years but this year has, of course, been different. *Campaign* conducted a survey among 12 of the top experiential agencies which revealed that over 500 events had been cancelled by these alone, amounting to a loss of £55.9m. Some agencies have been able to adapt. Iris, for example was able to deliver festival work in a digital format. As restrictions have eased, socially distanced events have emerged, although Live Nation’s “Covid-secure” drive-in concert tour, due to be held in June, had to be cancelled because of “localised lockdowns”. Whatever the future, it is clear that consumers still have an appetite for experiences: it is just a question of how to deliver them!

Campaign, September 2020, pp60-63 (Douglas)

Economic contribution of arts and culture

A brief House of Commons Library briefing paper offers some data on the arts and culture industries, ahead of the Westminster debate scheduled for 6 October on the contribution of theatres, live music venues and other cultural attractions to the local

economy. The economic output of the sector amounted to £10.47 billion in gross value added last year, equating to 0.5% of the economy. Yet the arts and culture sectors have been amongst the hardest-hit during the pandemic. A more detailed discussion of the impact of the coronavirus on the sector was published in a DCMS report published in July, for which a link is provided.

commonslibrary.parliament.uk, 5 October 2020 (Hutton and Woodhouse);

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9018/>

Materials and mining

Structural colour – a cool option?

Cypris Materials has created paint inspired by the blue morpho butterfly, which derives its colour from blue lightwaves reflecting off the nanostructure of its wings. Cypris' paint also works through reflection, with lightwaves reflecting off the nanostructure of the paint. The paint works through structural colour rather than chemical pigments or dyes. It has many potential applications, such as reflecting UV light from outdoor furniture to prevent it fading or acting as a cooling agent in cities to help reduce environmental impact. The paint is not currently on sale to consumers but structural colour could appear in consumer goods, such as cosmetics, within the next couple of years, and in automotive and buildings within the next five years.

fastcompany.com, 2 October 2020 (Smith)

Cornish lithium and EVs

Lithium was first discovered in Cornwall in the nineteenth century but back then there was no commercial use for it. Now it forms an essential component of electric car batteries. Cornish lithium deposits are attracting interest from prospectors amid hopes for a revival of the county's mining industry. There are currently two investors (Cornish Lithium and British Lithium) who have different approaches but both expect to start production in three to five years. Most global lithium comes from Chile, Argentina and Australia but global demand for the metal is expected to rise five-fold over the next 15 years and carmakers want a greater choice of suppliers. A report by the Faraday Institution in March said that one of the most important tasks for the car industry is attracting battery-makers. British Lithium aims to produce enough lithium to make 350,000 EVs a year.

economist.com, 3 October 2020

Media

Film

Cineworld to close for the year

Cineworld, the global cinema chain, is to close all 663 cinemas from 8 October, putting 45,000 jobs at

risk, 5,500 in the UK. It has been particularly hit by the limited number of people allowed in cinemas and the delayed release of big-budget movies. *No Time To Die*, the latest James Bond film, has been postponed twice and is now due for release next April. Lockdown caused group revenues to fall to \$712.4m in the first half of the year compared with \$2.15 billion last year. The company is to write to PM Boris Johnson and culture secretary Oliver Dowden explaining that the industry has become unviable. Cineworld hopes to reopen next year.

bbc.co.uk/news, 4 October 2020; bbc.co.uk/news, 5 October 2020

Quarter of Odeon cinemas – weekends only

Odeon, which has 120 cinemas in the UK, is to close a quarter of them during the week. Cinemas are stuck in a vicious cycle, with distributors and studios holding back high-profile films because they won't achieve the audience numbers. Even Christopher Nolan's *Tenet* failed to live up to box office expectations while Disney is putting some of its films straight on to its Disney+ streaming service. Over the past week, the top ten films in UK and Ireland cinemas took less than £2m at the box office compared with an average of £24m a week last year!

theguardian.com, 5 October 2020 (Sweney)

Games

Gamer mothers

There are over 2.7 billion gamers worldwide and a significant proportion of them are mothers. Women have traditionally been dismissed as "casual" rather than "real" gamers; but research from Activision Blizzard Media in partnership with Alter Agents revealed that over two-third of mothers play video games: 90% playing at least weekly while 74% play mobile games daily. The study, conducted among 25- to 54-year-old women with at least one child at home under the age of 18, also found that gamer mothers consume more entertainment and engage more with social media than non-gamer mothers. Those that play across a variety of platforms are the biggest content consumers, with social media content consumption 30% higher than for non-gamer mothers. Gamer mothers also believe that entertainment improves their mood compared with non-gamers and they are more likely to feel that they can easily relate to their children.

researchworld.com, 28 September 2020 (Worriolow and Rogers)

Music

Spotify launches personalised fitness

Spotify has launched Spotify Pumped, a fitness microsite for High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT). Users answer questions about their workout space, intensity level and music style to create a workout with a personalised playlist and voice recordings

encouraging them to exercise. Spotify has launched an outdoor campaign using lines like "HIIT Me Baby One More Time". The ads have been placed on popular running routes as well as inside gyms and within fitness apps.

marketingweek.com 1 October 2020

Newspapers

Google to offer \$1 billion to license content

Publications that depend on advertising have often relied on Google to direct traffic to them. Others have developed new models, such as paid content, to try to reduce their dependency on the search giant. Google has just launched a new option called Google News Showcase, which will pay \$1 billion in licensing fees to news publishers, "to create and curate high-quality content" for new story panels that will appear on Google News. Google has already made deals with 200 publications in six countries including the UK. It is unclear how much publishers will make or whether the money can be used for other business models that don't necessarily include Google.

techcrunch.com, 1 October 2020 (Lunden)

Television

Indie TV production achieved record revenues

Revenues in the independent TV production sector rose by 11% to reach a record £3.3 billion last year, according to the Pact UK Production Census. International income exceeded the £1 billion mark for the first time while domestic income was £1,943m. The data show that the North West, Wales and the South West benefited from the most "significant" spend, with nearly a quarter of this coming from international investment. Pact CEO John McVay says he believes that, despite the difficulties this year, the sector will "continue this international success story".

prolificnorth.co.uk, 2 October 2020 (Chapman)

Packaging

Front-of-package nutrition labels

A study in the *Journal of Marketing* looks at the effect of moving food nutrition labels to the front of the pack. In the US, where diet-related chronic diseases are a growing problem, the Front-of-Package (FoP) nutrition label has been adopted voluntarily by food manufacturers. Here they can provide a concise, easily-understood version of the nutrient information that is usually on the back or side of packs. The researchers report on four sets of findings which overall demonstrate that FoP labels are beneficial to consumers because they also encourage food manufacturers to improve the nutritional quality of their products.

ama.org, 15 September 2020 (Lim et al)

Shoppers fear loose products

New research for *The Grocer* reveals that 29% of shoppers have felt less comfortable buying loose groceries since the onset of the pandemic. While paper packaging was considered the safest option by 28%, no packaging (12%) wasn't considered to be a lot safer than plastic packaging (11%) even though academic research suggests that the virus can last for up to three days on plastic. Plastic packaging consumption rocketed during lockdown, while sales of loose foods fell by 6% in the four weeks to 14 June, according to Kantar. Many retailers started bagging goods in single-use plastic as a result, but reversed their policy after lockdown ended.

thegrocer.co.uk, 2 October 2020 (Farrell)

Retailing

H&M to close 250 stores

H&M, the second largest fashion retailer, is to close 250 stores around the world. Sales started to recover in September, but they were 5% lower than in 2019. The company has 5,000 stores worldwide with 166 remaining closed due to local restrictions. Richard Lim of Retail Economics, says that clothing and footwear have been particularly affected by the consumer shift online. There has also been a move from high streets and shopping centres towards retail parks. H&M, meanwhile, says it will speed up plans to boost digital investment to cope with increased online demand.

bbc.co.uk/news, 1 October 2020

Retail media advertising

An advantage of retail media advertising is its ability to use closed-loop attribution, linking engagement to sales. This is possible because the same company is running the ad and selling the advertised product. However, the phasing out of third-party cookies by Google Chrome and Apple's use of the Identifier for Advertisers opt-in, will make things harder for marketers. Large e-commerce platforms, such as Amazon, Walmart and Instacart, can help retail advertisers to make the necessary connections and their e-commerce ad offerings are likely to become more attractive to retailers as time goes on.

emarketer.com, 5 October 2020 (Perrin)

Services

Cheeky new app – flushed with success?

Now is the time to launch a new dating app, if ever there was one. Match Group (owner of match.com, OKCupid and others) has reported a 15% rise in subscribers since the start of the pandemic. Tushy, the bidet maker, has launched a dating app for "like-behinded" people to meet. Cheek2Cheek, which is currently in beta mode, works like Tinder with a swipe left- or right-based system. The difference is

that it is very “poop-centric”, as it encourages users to upload details of their bowel movements! Tushy is even offering to cover wedding costs of up to \$20,000 for one lucky couple who meet on Cheek2Cheek.

forbes.com, 2 October 2020 (Silver)

Deliveroo widget changes ordering model

Deliveroo is to enable customers to place orders on its partner sites rather than through the Deliveroo app or site. The special widget, “Brought to you by Deliveroo”, is already in use by Nando’s and Wagamama. It says that the new product will allow restaurants to reach more customers and “deepen engagement” which will be especially valuable to independent restaurants. Deliveries will still be undertaken by Deliveroo.

thegrocer.co.uk, 5 October 2020 (Nott)

Transport and travel

Aviation and decarbonisation

The aviation industry has been under pressure to reduce its impact on climate change. This House of Commons Library briefing paper, *Aviation, decarbonisation and climate change*, offers an overview of UK and international policies on decarbonising the aviation sector. It covers market-based measures, technological solutions and demand management.

commonslibrary.parliament.uk, 1 October 2020 (Hirst and Mason)

Car sales at record low for September

September saw demand for new cars in the UK fall to their lowest level for 21 years. New registrations fell by 4.4% in September, which usually accounts for around 20% of annual registrations due to the introduction of the new number plate. In the year to date new car sales have fallen by a third to 1.24m. On a more optimistic note, sales of battery electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids made up one in ten new registrations, with sales of battery EVs up by 184% year-on-year. The SMMT says that the sector is unlikely to recover its lost sales for the year, which are likely to amount to £21.2 billion.

**theguardian.com, 5 October 2020 (Partridge);
thetimes.co.uk, 6 October 2020 (Lea)**

Written by CIM’s Knowledge Services Team

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