

Cutting Edge: Our weekly analysis of marketing news

28 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

Reaching consumers in their homes

Many activities are taking place in people's homes this year, but this doesn't mean that advertisers can't still reach them. The so-called "homebody" economy (shopping, studying, working and entertainment) was happening long before the pandemic, which has simply accelerated the trend. Over a third of Americans say they plan to leave home only for essential activities, according to McKinsey and over 70% say they will continue with much of their "pandemic-friendly" behaviour. Advertisers will need to interact with consumers in their homes and there are plenty of opportunities to do so. However, the most effective ads will still be based on principles that produced good ads before the pandemic. Humour and experiences, for example, will be in favour with consumers who are tired of their household routines. This article examines entertainment and social media advertising, desktop ads and advertising related to home DIY projects.

[ama.org](#), 8 October 2020 (Heisler)

Digital adspend falls for first half of 2020

Despite people spending more time online during the lockdown, digital adspend fell by 5% to £7.06 billion in the UK, for the first half of 2020, according to the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB). However, video revenue rose by 5.7% compared with the first half of 2019 while the display market grew very slightly, by 0.3%. Jon Mew, CEO of IAB UK, says that the digital ad market has had 22 years of consecutive growth so "went into this crisis in a position of strength".

[research-live.com](#), 15 October 2020

Google joins EASA

Google has become the first corporate member of the European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA). The body consists of 28 self-regulatory organisations in 26 European countries. Google will pay a fee and help to fund self-regulatory organisations, such as the ASA, which was a founding member of EASA. Online advertising regulation now makes up around 60% of the ASA's work.

[marketingweek.com](#), 15 October 2020;

<https://www.easa-alliance.org/news/easa/google-joins-easa>

Agencies

Havas creates customer experience network

Havas wants to improve its customer experience offerings by bringing together 20 of its global and local agencies with customer experience experts, under the umbrella brand Havas CX. With key hubs in London, Paris, New York and Mumbai, Havas says the aim is to look at customer experience from a more holistic and less siloed perspective. Havas Group chairman and CEO Yannick Bolloré argues that "customer experience is the bedrock on which a brand is built" and "brands that get it right will win, and those that don't will lose".

[decisionmarketing.co.uk](#), 14 October 2020

Publicis benefits from Epsilon halo effect

Despite a 5.6% decline in organic revenues between July and September compared with the previous year, Publicis Groupe has beaten market expectations for the third quarter. CEO Arthur Sadoun attributes this to a number of factors: the agency's "Power of One" approach, which brings together creative, media and digital so that clients have a single, comprehensive offering; the acquisition in Q2 of data analytics firm Epsilon, which Sadoun says is having "a halo effect across



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the organisation and our ability to offer personalisation at scale"; and changes to organisational structure. However, he is cautious about Q4, when markets might start to enter national or local lockdowns.

thedrum.com, 15 October 2020 (Stewart)

Brands and branding

China's top 100 brands

China's top 100 brands have increased their value by 12% this year, rising to \$996 billion, according to the latest annual *BrandZ* ranking for the country from WPP and Kantar. Alibaba retains its position as the most valuable brand with Tencent in second place and alcohol brand Moutai in third. Fourteen out of the 24 business categories experienced growth, with entertainment gaining the most value for the second consecutive year. However, technology accounted for a quarter of the top 100's total value. Doreen Wang, CEO of Kantar China, says brands must "respond to shifting consumer priorities" and that "understanding consumers depends on having "deep human-centred insights".

marketingweek.com, 15 October 2020;

<https://www.kantar.com/campaigns/brandz/china/>

Conferences and events

Zoom introduces events marketplace

Zoom has launched an events marketplace offering a space where people can find workshops, classes and other events to attend. As well as taking part via Zoom, people can gift OnZoom tickets to friends and family. Zoom says the beta version will run through to the end of 2020. It seems that virtual events are here for the long-term and that in the future, digital events may take place at the same time as live events. Businesses are advised to start planning for their longer-term content strategy.

prdaily.com, 14 October 2020

IMEX proposes circular economy

Global business event organiser the IMEX Group has launched a new report which calls on the events industry to embrace the circular economy. *The Regenerative Revolution, A New Paradigm for Event Management* sets out the economic opportunities presented by the circular economy. Cambridge Economics estimates that applying circular economy principles across the EU could result in 700,000 new jobs and benefit the economy to the tune of €1.8 billion by 2030. The report argues that sustainability in itself is no longer enough, since the earth's resources are being rapidly depleted, and looks at issues such as food waste, climate change and the misuse of materials. It concludes by proposing a new draft events framework, called Hannuwa, which IMEX aims to implement once live events return.

eventindustrynews.com, 15 October 2020 (Parry);

<https://www.imexexhibitions.com/the-regenerative-revolution>

Consumer behaviour

Consumer want cheerful festive ads

According to a new survey, almost half of UK consumers (47%) want this year's Christmas ads to make them feel happy, 44% want to feel warm and 31% nostalgic. The proportion of consumers who say they want the ads to make them feel informed has fallen to just 15%, down from 42% back in April. Only a third of those questioned said they thought that Christmas ads should mention the coronavirus. The verdict is that consumers don't want to be reminded about the "grim realities" of the year and that advertisers should take the chance to deliver "highly-targeted, personalised ads across all screens". The research was carried out by video ad companies Unruly and Tremor Video

marketingweek.com, 21 October 2020

Customer relations

Reducing customer risk – boosting loyalty

The author examines the link between customer loyalty and risk management. Helping to solve a problem, reducing risk and living a safer life can improve and enhance customer relationships. Telling the truth means that customers trust you, while being honest engenders loyalty and showing integrity is proof that you care. Customer service can be risky because service providers ask customers to "put their hopes and often their dreams in our hands". It is the duty of customer service to ensure that the customer is at as little risk as possible. The VW emissions crisis is cited as an example of a company that reduced its customers' risks.

CRM Magazine, Vol 24(8) 2020, p30 (Wynn)

Direct marketing

Klarna sends out unsolicited emails

Klarna, the Swedish fintech, has apologised to UK retailers after sending its email newsletter to thousands of people who had not signed up for it. The company offers buy-now-pay-later schemes and online checkout services to many well-known retailers. It has rejected claims that it didn't have permission to hold customers' data and that it breached the Privacy & Electronic Communications Regulation (PECR). However, PECR states that companies must have an opt-in clause, so Klarna could be on shaky ground. The ICO says that "Businesses should only contact individuals for electronic marketing purposes where consent has been provided or, in limited circumstances, where they have an existing relationship with a customer".

decisionmarketing.co.uk, 14 October 2020

Law

New guidelines for Covid-19 depiction in ads

The ASA has published three new guiding principles which it will use to assess advertising that shows behaviours “which go against current government and scientific rules and guidelines that are aimed at limiting the spread of COVID-19 through the population”. This follows complaints from consumers about ads that contradict Government rules on social distancing, or the use of PPS, such as showing crowds of people in close proximity. Businesses should be aware of complying with the wider CAP Code as well as the ASA’s focus on depicting protective measures in ads.

lexology.com, 12 October 2020 (Schippers)

A patchwork

GDPR was implemented in May 2018 across Europe. The US has generally lagged behind when managing the data of EU citizens and has no central regulation. There are, however, federal laws protecting children, financial information and health data. State legislation has only been implemented in three states (California, Main and Nevada) but 18 states are working on implementing it. Yet the legislation is – according to one campaigning group – “woefully out of date and failing to provide the necessary protections for our modern age”.

Verdict Magazine, September 2020

Marketing

Aligning sales and marketing

If sales and marketing teams don’t get along well, it is obviously not good for business. A Forrester study found that 43% of CEOs believed that sales and marketing misalignment had damaged sales. This article looks at the four key signs that marketing and sales are misaligned and some ways of tackling the problem. These include: encouraging teams to listen to each other; promoting and sustaining consistency in expectations, data and technology; and considering the sales team’s input in content marketing. Ultimately teams have to be constantly interacting with each other and learning from one another in order to maintain a constant flow of ideas and strategies.

blog.hubspot.com, October 2020 (Fuchs)

CMOs will reinvent themselves next year

Successful CMOs in 2021 will be the ones that reinvent themselves, their teams and marketing, according to Forrester’s *Predictions 2021*. It foresees that chief marketers will have to create new commercial and delivery models to adapt to the new market environment by “getting their hands dirty with their teams”. They will also need to have full control of the customer journey. Forrester expects that spend on loyalty and retention marketing will rise by 30% next year. CMOs will integrate marketing and customer experience over the coming

months, if they haven’t already done so, which will end the division between acquisition and post-acquisition contacts. This article also comments on the role of the CIO and its growing importance for brands.

thedrum.com, 16 October 2020 (Glenday)

Market research

Research a priority for frontier CMOs

Some 40% of chief marketing officers say their greatest challenge over the next six to 12 months will be understanding temporary vs permanent changes in consumer behaviour. According to 39% of respondents, aligning with new and changing consumer sentiment and dealing with declining consumer spend will also be key challenges,. However, 49% say they have been using existing approaches to cope during the pandemic. The research, conducted by Denstu, identifies what so-called “frontier CMOs” – those who believe their organisations are well prepared to manage over the next six months – are doing. This group say their most important strategy is understanding changes in consumer behaviour and conducting market research.

research-live.com, 14 October 2020 (McQuater)

ONS develops new insight

Household finance statistics have tended to focus on either income, spending or wealth, which, individually, can offer important insights. However, they can also provide a greater understanding of economic well-being when they are assessed together. Realising that using each measure on its own is not sufficient to give a full understanding of the experience of households, the ONS has created a new experimental dataset which matches spending to income and wealth data. The new data show that all three are, not surprisingly, highly related. The aim is to get a better understanding of the effect of the pandemic on living standards, poverty and inequality.

blog.ons.gov.uk, 22 October 2020 (Webber)

Public relations

Be honest – develop purpose

Purpose has become an important aspect of any organisation but it must be authentic, based on the company’s foundations and created with stakeholders. A lot of “purpose washing” takes place in which companies create a purpose with the sole intention of bolstering their reputation, adding something to their marketing, or boosting PR. Yet no organisation is perfect. What matters when starting on the “purpose journey”, is whether you try to hide past mistakes or confront them. Patagonia is an example of a company that is transparent about its faults while setting out clear goals and strategies to address them. Whatever situation your company is in, there are a number of principles to take into

account when defining your organisation's purpose. Ultimately, honesty can help you build stronger relationships and engender loyalty with customers.

prdaily.com, 15 October 2020 (Cone and Kenney)

Ben & Jerry's – a case study in social activism

Ice cream brand Ben & Jerry's has never been afraid to express its opinion, even if it has meant being on the receiving end of Twitter abuse, such as when it voiced support for migrants crossing the English Channel. While some companies are jumping on the "purpose" bandwagon, (see previous article), Ben & Jerry's has embraced social activism from the very beginning. This means that it will continue to attract controversy and charges of hypocrisy. Director of PR and communications Sean Greenwood, who is interviewed in this article, says "The idea is not to have a campaign that accurately reflects every single person and their values". He also like to use employees as the "first line of external communications".

PR Week, September-October 2020, pp56-57 (Moore)

Kantar launches reputation platform

Kantar has developed a platform for those in communications and PR to help them plan, target and analyse earned media activity. It also offers alerts for news coverage and various metrics for measuring impact. Francis Ingham, director general of the PRCA, describes Kantar Reputation as "the most comprehensive media monitoring and analysis platform".

research-live.com, 15 October 2020

Sponsorship

Be cautious when using virtual advertising

Rights-holders have gone to some lengths to generate value for sponsors during a period when traditional channels have been closed to them. This might involve digital replacement technology (DRT) or virtual assets in empty stadiums. US Major League Soccer pioneered an approach in which the adidas brand, its biggest sponsor, appeared in the pitch central circle during matches. Nevertheless, a new report, entitled *Virtual advertising, cutting through the regulation* (by Supponor and UK law firm Lewis Silkin) warns rights-holders to exercise caution when using virtual advertising and suggests that regulation could be the biggest barrier to widespread adoption. Rights-holders and broadcasters should demonstrate that virtual ads are being used as a practical alternative to physical advertising and brands should not be given "undue prominence" during a match. On the other hand, it should soon be possible to tailor virtual advertising in online sports programming to individual viewers.

sportbusiness.com, 14 October 2020 (Cronin)

Most marketable sports properties

The Fifa World Cup has been named the most marketable property in sport, ahead of the Summer Olympic Games and the National Basketball Association. The first *World's 50 Most Marketable Properties* from SportsPro, ranks international sports properties, such as leagues, teams and events, on seven key metrics. This ranking, along with The *World's 50 Most Marketable Athletes* and *World's 50 Most Marketed Brands*, aims to provide sponsorship professionals with insight to help them identify the best opportunities.

sportspromedia.com, 12 October 2020;

<https://50mm.sportspromedia.com/>

Sponsorship agreements in the pandemic era

The pandemic has had a significant impact on sponsorship rights in sport. Sports bodies have had to cancel or postpone fixtures as well as impose restrictions on events. This has affected sponsorship rights to the events or the venues. Both rights holders and parties will need to come up with more creative contractual arrangements that account for risk and uncertainty in this environment. This article argues that now is the time for collaborative contracting to create a mutually beneficial relationship. "Creativity, flexibility and cooperation" are the keywords when negotiating sponsorship agreements in a post-COVID environment.

pinentmasons.com, 20 October 2020 (Early)

Agriculture, fishing and forestry

New geographical indication scheme for UK

The UK has unveiled its new geographical indication scheme to replace that of the EU after 1st January 2021. Defra says that the Geographical Indications (GI) schemes will set out the authenticity and origin of products such as Scotch whisky and Welsh lamb. Producers of GI status goods will have intellectual property protection to stave off harmful copycats. GIs currently account for about a quarter of UK food and drink exports by value (nearly £6 billion last year). Three new GI logos have been developed for the UK: Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG).

farmington.com, 22 October 2020

Consumers look to local food outlets

According to a recent survey by Barclays, 63% of Britons are buying more homegrown produce while over a quarter are buying food from local shops and farm stores instead of purchasing everything from the supermarket. Farm retailers are able to react "nimble" to customer needs because of their independence and direct relationships with customers, according to Rob Copley, chair of the

Farm Retail Association. Consumer spend at independent stores has risen by 20% over the past year, according to data from Kantar. A CLA survey reveals that 55% of young people in London say they would like to move from the city to the countryside as a result of the pandemic.

[fginsight.com](https://www.fginsight.com), 23 October 2020 (Binns and Kay);
[cla.org.uk](https://www.cla.org.uk), 21 October 2020

Building industry

Improving diversity – women in construction

As part of its Women in Construction initiative, *Construction News* recently set up a panel discussion to examine the role that men need to play if the industry is to succeed in improving diversity. It acknowledged that many people working in the industry don't understand the depth of the problem and that unconscious and personal biases can turn into organisational behaviours. Reverse mentoring was mentioned as an increasingly popular trend, where a younger member of staff or one from a minority background, is paired with a more senior colleague. John Broughton of Wilmott Dixon said that his company aims to achieve gender parity by 2030. Studies suggest that more diverse teams get better results.

[constructionnews.co.uk](https://www.constructionnews.co.uk), 22 October 2020 (Price)

Robots to fix potholes

The University of Liverpool has developed a new robot that can repair potholes and cracks in roads. The spinout company, called Robotiz3d, will develop an AI system that can autonomously "detect and characterise" road defects, assess their severity and fix cracks before they turn into more serious problems, according to Dr Sebastiano Fichera, technical director of the company. This should lead to faster, cheaper and cleaner ways of fixing roads, both nationally and internationally.

[constructionenquirer.com](https://www.constructionenquirer.com), 23 October 2020 (Prior)

Generating new leads in a virtual world

Architects have been suffering from delayed projects and reduced workloads. This suggests that they should be making more time for marketing to ensure that their pipeline doesn't dry up altogether. Lo Marketing's Susie Lo shares seven tips on how to generate new leads in a virtual environment. She will also be presenting *Getting on top of your digital marketing* at RIBA's Guerrilla Tactics 2020 online conference in November.

[architecture.com](https://www.architecture.com), 22 October 2020

Businesses and strategy

Sponsorship – a new approach to diversity?

There is growing evidence that diversity programmes don't work so companies are using different approaches, such as sponsorship. This is defined as a "helping relationship in which senior,

powerful people use their personal clout to talk up, advocate for, and place a more junior person in a key role". While mentors share their knowledge and experience, sponsors use their influence with senior executives to advocate for their protégés. However, sponsorship initiatives only work if they are designed carefully. This article elaborates on the sponsor-protégé relationship and examines the spectrum of support on offer.

[hbr.org](https://www.hbr.org), 9 October 2020 (Ibarra and von Bernuth)

B2B sales – the future is digital

B2B buyers and sellers have had to move to digital because of the pandemic. It started out as a crisis response but now it has become the "next normal" and there are huge implications for the way in which buyers and sellers will do business in the future. Research by McKinsey suggests that the digital shift is "here to stay". In fact, only 20% of B2B buyers say that they hope to return to in-person sales, even in areas, such as pharma and medical products, where field-sales models have tended to dominate. This article includes graphs illustrating just how much B2B sales have changed, how belief in the efficacy of digital is growing across countries and how video and live chat have become the main channels for interacting and closing B2B sales.

[mckinsey.com](https://www.mckinsey.com), 14 October 2020 (Bages-Amat et al)

Remote working – sustaining company culture

One of the main arguments against remote working is that people need to be working together to create a company culture and for leadership to be able to influence that culture. A recent *Management Today/Hays* survey reveals just how important culture is considered to be. The vast majority (91.7%) of respondents said that sustaining culture was an important or very important factor in deciding their remote working policy, after productivity (96.5%) and office costs (just 48.7%). Some 72.3% agreed that employees need to be in the office in order to sustain culture but 82.7% thought that between one and three days was sufficient to achieve this.

[managementtoday.co.uk](https://www.managementtoday.co.uk), 8 October 2020 (Gale)

Charities and NGOs

Interactive fundraising content

Engaging, interactive content has become essential for charities that are trying to break through the clutter and get their message out, but producing content to boost fundraising does not necessarily require a big budget. Interactive content helps to build a two-way relationship between charities and their supporters. Charities are using digital tools to help design their content, such as WWF's campaign to conserve tigers, which used an interactive chatbot to engage audiences through mobile phone

messaging. The author offers four tips for interactive fundraising content.

charitydigital.org.uk, 20 October 2020 (Chiu)

Reduced income over Christmas says survey

A quarter of charities say that donation income could be over 25% lower this Christmas than it was last year, according to the latest *Covid Charity Tracker* survey from Pro Bono Economics. Some 44% of respondents said the Christmas period was significant to their total annual income. Among smaller charities, two out of five expect their donation income to be more than a quarter lower this Christmas than in 2019. Meanwhile, 19% of charities say they will be unable to deliver their services adequately over Christmas and over 90% expect the pandemic to continue to detract from their services next year. However, 26% of respondents believe that collaboration between charities could help them to deliver their objectives. The survey also looked at job losses and loan schemes from the Government.

fundraising.co.uk, 26 October 2020 (May);
<https://www.probonoeconomics.com/october-12-18-covid-charity-tracker-survey-results>

Improving the donor experience

The pandemic has affected the way people donate, help and communicate with charities. Charities have been particularly affected by the cancellation of fundraising events and the switch to virtual. Now is the time for them to write a plan for doing things differently, including how to engage with supporters and to deliver the optimum experience. Here are some tips for helping to improve the donor experience. They include a digital experience platform; getting the right insights from data; and embracing the power of social media. The British Heart Foundation, Chester Zoo, Alzheimer's Society, St Rocco's Hospice, Behind Closed Doors and Macmillan Cancer Support are mentioned in the article.

charitycomms.org, 23 October 2020 (Capper)

Hovis joins child food poverty taskforce

Hovis becomes the latest brand to sign up to footballer Marcus Rashford's poverty taskforce created to tackle "the UK's child food poverty crisis". Hovis already partners with FareShare, a member of the taskforce and part of a wider food poverty campaign. Other brands, such as Deliveroo and Tesco, have already joined the taskforce.

thegrocer.co.uk, 26 October 2020 (Dawson)

Durable consumer goods

Toymakers predict strong festive sales

Toymakers are expecting a "good holiday Season", according to Mattel, whose Barbie dolls have achieved their highest quarterly sales since 2003.

Toymakers have benefited from families buying toys and games to use during the various lockdowns. In the first nine months of 2020 Hasbro's sales grew by 13% year-on-year, contrasting markedly with the general decline in consumer spending. Mattel expects that Christmas growth will be up by 5% compared with last year. But analysts warn that toymakers could be disappointed as family budgets are under pressure amid continued concerns over the coronavirus. Nevertheless, parents might just decide to put their children's needs above their household finances.

bbc.co.uk/news, 26 October 2020

Economy

Payroll numbers up – overall numbers down

There were 20,000 more employees on payrolls in the UK in September compared with August, according to the ONS's latest *Labour market overview*. Since March 2020 the number of payroll employees has fallen by 673,000 but this fall was experienced at the start of the pandemic. Following a record low of 343,000 vacancies from April to June, there has been an estimated record quarterly increase of 144,000 to 488,000 vacancies for July to September. Yet vacancies have remained below pre-pandemic levels and there are 40.5% fewer than a year ago. There has also been "a stark rise in the number of people who have recently been made redundant".

ons.gov.uk, 13 October 2020 (Leaker);
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/latest#main-points>

London's millennials – a financial crisis

Almost three-quarters (72%) of London's 3.5m millennials are at risk of financial damage from the pandemic while 17% are at risk of "financial devastation", according to research from Metrix Data Science. It has defined 11 groups of millennials (20- to 40-year-olds) in London. The worst hit financially are the "Young Warriors" and "South of the river" while those at low financial risk include the "Tech warriors", "Streets of Gold" and "Knightsbridge Knights".

decisionmarketing.co.uk, 15 October 2020

Education

Adults want modular learning at university

According to a new poll, 82% of prospective students in England who are unemployed, have jobs at risk, or want to learn new skills, would be keen to study individual modules at university level. Two-thirds of those surveyed by Savanta ComRes, said that if the Government were to offer loans to study individual modules, they would be more inclined to study at university. At present, prospective students must agree to undertake 25% of the work of a full-

time student if they want financial support from the Government. Modular learning is considered to be most beneficial because it allows “earning while learning” as well as a good work-life balance. Universities have been calling on the Government for a system of loans that enables more flexible study. The findings are part of a wider report entitled: *Recovery, skills, knowledge and opportunity: A vision for universities* published by Universities UK, which outlines reforms aimed at enhancing universities’ contribution to the country’s well-being, economy and communities.

universitiesuk.ac.uk, 21 October 2020;
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/uuk-he-vision-2020.aspx>

Marketing schools

Schools in Oxfordshire are utilising film-makers to create a glimpse of life at the school where open evenings would normally be employed. Access restrictions due to the pandemic have left schools struggling to attract pupils but the films can introduce the school and the key staff.

The Herald, 20 October 2020

Energy and utilities

World energy investment falls

The IEA’s *World Energy Investment 2020* report, released in May, suggested a record slump in global energy investment. The report has since been updated to reflect more recent analysis which shows that capital expenditure in the energy sector is predicted to fall by 18% this year. Pressures on spending continue due to weaker corporate finances and uncertainty over future demand. Upstream oil and gas spending is likely to decline by 35% due to cuts by shale companies in the US. This is expected to lead to the consolidation of businesses. Recent merger announcements include Chevron and Noble Energy and Devon Energy and WPX. Meanwhile, clean-energy sectors have seen a smaller economic contraction and better performance, especially in renewables. The analysis includes graphs.

iea.org, 23 October 2020;
<https://www.iea.org/articles/investment-estimates-for-2020-continue-to-point-to-a-record-slump-in-spending>

Water – the first innovation strategy

The water industry has launched its very first innovation strategy, which aims to deliver greater value for customers, produce better outcomes for the environment and make the industry more innovative. Developed by 19 water companies, UK Water Industry Research and Arup, it sets out a vision for the sector up to 2050. As part of the strategy, a “centre of excellence” will be established allowing water companies to collaborate and access skills.

water.org.uk, 16 October 2020;
<https://waterinnovation2050.org.uk/>

Environment

Ikea kicks off circular business model

Ikea aims to create a circular business model with the launch of a second-hand furniture initiative. The new Buy Back scheme will enable consumers to return unwanted furniture in exchange for vouchers worth up to 50% of the original price, which they can spend in-store. The aim is for every Ikea store to have a dedicated space where people can sell back their furniture. The scheme coincides with Black Friday and Ikea hopes that it will help consumers to “take a stand” against excessive consumerisation. Its goal is to be a “fully circular and climate positive business” by 2030.

marketingweek.com, 14 October 2020

WRAP launches new food waste campaign

The UK wastes 9.5m tonnes of food every year according to a new report from sustainability charity WRAP. The key point is that 70% of this wastage comes from homes, rather than farms, producers and supermarkets. Yet less than a third of people know that wasting food is contributing to climate change. For example, domestic bread waste alone generates 318,000 tonnes of CO2 annually, equivalent to that emitted by 140,000 cars, while the 920,000 bananas thrown away every day wastes the 330 billion litres of water used to grow them annually. WRAP has launched a new brand called Wasting Food: It’s Out of Date to communicate the message that wasting food is as socially unacceptable as, say, littering.

energylive.com, 16 October 2020 (Bairstow);
<https://wrap.org.uk/content/we-wont-fix-climate-change-if-we-dont-stop-wasting-food>

Fashion

Formal wear – no longer suitable?

Many office workers who are based at home have swapped their suits for casual attire, such as track suits, but the lack of demand for formal wear is having severe repercussions across the supply chain. At the farming end, prices for Australia’s merino wool have hit rock bottom, with sheep farmers choosing to store their wool in the hope that things will get better. In the middle, wool mills in northern Italy who buy from the farmers, have seen retailers’ orders plunge. Meanwhile some stores in the US and Europe that specialise in business clothing (such as Men’s Wearhouse, J. Crew and TM Lewin) have been closing stores or have filed for bankruptcy.

reuters.com, 16 October 2020 (Aloisi et al)

Standing out – fashion for disability

For people with disabilities and those who are “gender nonconforming”, it can be hard to find clothing that fits comfortably or conveys their identity. Sky Cubacub, a Chicago-based designer,

has founded a label called Rebirth Garments which makes clothing for different bodies and gender identities. It creates custom-made garments that are bold and colourful so that the people wearing them no longer feel "invisible". Other fashion brands, such as Tommy Hilfiger and Zappos, have started to recognise the need for adaptive clothing. Cubacub says she has never had to pay for marketing; people find her because "This is such an underserved community".

[fastcompany.com](https://www.fastcompany.com), 22 October 2020 (Segran)

Financial services

Don't economise on customer experience

Improving customer experience has become a major trend among financial institutions. The leaders in customer experience achieve a higher recommendation rate, a higher share of deposits and a greater likelihood that customers will use more of their products and services, according to a Kantar study. On the other hand, those that let their customer experience decline, could lose up to 12.5% of deposits. The research also identifies greater opportunities from improved customer experience among female consumers. Kantar sets out five keys to providing an improved banking experience. It also ranks some US banks on their ability to deliver the best customer experience in line with brand promise. Some 83% of customers of so-called "CX+" leaders say their bank actively supplies them with relevant advice and recommendations, according to Kantar. Overall, the evidence suggests that the financial impact of improving customer experience makes it well worth the investment!

[thefinancialbrand.com](https://www.thefinancialbrand.com), 22 October 2020 (Marcus)

Negative interest rates – bad for digital banks

Last month Starling Bank became the first UK lender to charge customers for keeping money in their current account. Those with a balance of over €50,000 will have to pay -0.5%, which brings the bank in line with the Eurozone. Economic instability caused by the pandemic could lead to negative interest rates in the UK. This month the Bank of England wrote to British banks asking for information on their "operational readiness" for negative interest rates. Negative interest rates pose quite a threat for digital banks that have built their businesses on low margin retail customers. The likes of Monzo, Revolut and Starling have already been badly hit by the pandemic but from a technology perspective, they should be able to process negative interest rates easily. However, for traditional banks, experts have suggested that the changes could be likened to the Y2K bug...

[wired.co.uk](https://www.wired.co.uk), 21 October 2020 (Weeks)

BBVA launches mobile-first card

BBVA bank in Spain is offering its customers "blank" physical and digital payment cards, with no account numbers and a dynamic CVV code. When the customer wants to buy something, they must launch the app on iPhone or Android. The Aqua cardholder can also choose between in-store mobile payments and contactless ATM withdrawals. The functionality, which is based on cloud technology and cryptographic algorithms, should result in greater security.

[nfcw.com](https://www.nfcw.com), 22 October 2020 (Phillips)

FMCG

Beverages

20-year deal

A new exclusive arrangement has been reached between PepsiCo and Britvic for the production, distribution, marketing and sales of its fizzy soft drinks brands. The arrangement runs to 2040 and there will be a new addition to the usual brands with the inclusion of the Rockstar energy drink which Britvic will be responsible for from November. Britvic has also announced that it is moving to 100% recycled plastics within the next 15 months.

[The Grocer](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk), 20 October 2020

Coca-Cola launches in UK alcohol market

There has been some speculation that Coca-Cola would enter the alcohol market this year. Now it has finally launched its Topo Chico Hard Seltzer brand, a mix of sparkling water, alcohol and natural flavours, in the UK. Over the past few years Coca-Cola has looked at becoming what it calls a "Total Beverage Company" by launching a range of new product development across categories which it hadn't previously been involved in. Ironically alcohol companies, such as Molson Coors and Carlsberg, have been eyeing up the non-alcoholic drinks market with ideas for their own hard seltzers and soft drinks.

[thegrocer.co.uk](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk), 27 October 2020 (Woolfson)

Food

Buzzing with authenticity

Manuka honey has seen a spike in sales following research by the University of Oxford that found it could be more effective at treating coughs and sore throats than over-the-counter pain killers and other associated products. Holland & Barrett has seen a 98% year-on-year sales rise and there has also been a boost of 18% to the whole honey market. Holland & Barrett follows the New Zealand government guidelines on checking the authenticity of the honey.

[The Grocer](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk), 19 October 2020

Biscuity upgrade

Fox's Biscuits have just been purchased for £246m by Ferrero. The biscuit brand is being moved upmarket with additional chocolate and butter being included in its ranges. Fox's is also being rebranded for a more upmarket look just in time for the Christmas rush.

The Grocer, 19 October 2020

Household

Disinfectant lines

Strong growth in the sales of disinfectants has been reported by Reckitt Benckiser with like-for-like growth of 13.3%. There are also double digit rises for Lysol, Finish and Air Wick. Durex, another Reckitt Benckiser brand, has also seen an improvement in sales. There has, however, been a slowdown in the demand for over-the-counter medicine owing to an earlier demand for products. There has also been an uplift in e-commerce sales of more than 45%.

The Grocer, 20 October 2020

Unilever to invest in digital manpower

Unilever CEO Alan Jope says the company increased its marketing spend in Q3 and will do so again in Q4. Unilever has previously said that it would invest two-thirds of the £1.75 billion saved through efficiency programmes in marketing and digital. It is setting up digital hubs around the company and hiring people with digital skills "for a more manpower intensive marketing world, where digital programmes take more resources". Unilever's underlying sales rose by 4.4% in Q3 thanks to homecare sales, especially cleaning and hygiene brands and innovations such as Dove's moisturising hand gel.

marketingweek.com, 22 October 2020 (Fleming)

Government and public sector

Coronavirus business support schemes

The House of Commons Library has published a report covering the schemes that are and have been available for businesses. These include: employment, job retention, self-employment, business loans of different types, Eat Out to Help Out, business rate relief and VAT deferrals, to name some.

[House of Commons Library](#), 19 October 2020

Companies House in digital transformation

Companies House, the UK's registrar of companies, plans to become a digital organisation. In a strategic plan, it has set out six goals which focus on registers, services and people. The organisation wants its data to "inspire trust and confidence" and to maximise its value to "combat economic crime through active use of analysis and intelligence". Companies House has published its 2020/21

business plan which sets out the first steps towards achieving its five-year strategy.

pinsentmasons.com, 21 September 2020 (20 October 2020);

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/companies-house-business-plan-2020-to-2021/companies-house-business-plan-2020-to-2021>

Health and pharmaceuticals

Monitoring too far?

The wearables market has seen a steady increase in interest, but the pandemic is likely to promote strong growth. Grand View Research believes the market will grow at a rate of 15.9% from 2020 to 2027. Patient monitoring, proximity monitoring and geo-tracking are three major areas of growth. However, surveillance is a concern: PwC has been criticised for developing the facial recognition software that has been used for checking staff working at home while Barclays is among those that have been monitoring staff at their desks. A lack of employee trust may help to rein in some of the more extreme products.

Verdict Magazine, September 2020

Medical donations could damage research

Medical charities could lose over £4 billion between now and 2027, due to charity shops closing and fundraising events not taking place, according to a new report from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR). This means that valuable research might have to be put on hold. The shortfall in funding could affect follow-up investment which in turn could lead to a funding gap of £8 billion (10% of UK health research). Although this is a worst-case scenario, the report calls on the Government to set up a life sciences-charity partnership to support medical charities. Dr Charmaine Griffiths, CEO of the British Heart Foundation (BHF), says: "Charities have driven significant breakthroughs which have turned the tide on some of our biggest killers, including heart disease and cancer". BHF has halved its research investment this year.

theguardian.com, 23 October 2020 (Sample)

IT and telecoms

Huawei new phone launch despite trade ban

Huawei has just unveiled its Mate 40 smartphone which it claims has a more "sophisticated" processor than Apple's new iPhones. The problem for Huawei is that its chip supply has been cut off due to the US trade ban which took effect in September. Once its store of Kirin 9000 processors runs out, it may not be able to make any more handsets. The trade ban also means that many apps are not available on the new phones unless the user clicks on an icon that launches the supplier's website. Huawei says that if an app is unavailable, users can add it to a "wish list". Experts question whether anyone other than "tech-savvy, committed Huawei enthusiasts" will

want to bother overcoming the hurdles.

bbc.co.uk/news, 22 October 2020

The UK Government's broadband programme

In 2010 the UK Government announced that it wanted the UK to have the best superfast broadband network in Europe to which end it set up the Superfast Broadband Programme to support broadband rollout to areas not commercially viable. This report looks at what the Programme has already delivered and how the UK's broadband infrastructure has fared during the current crisis. It also covers the management of current and future broadband provision and learning lessons. The report can be downloaded.

nao.org.uk, 16 October 2020;

<http://www.nao.org.uk/report/improving-broadband/>

Leisure and tourism

Potential ban on celebs in gambling ads

The use of celebrities in gambling ads could be banned if new rules proposed by the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) are brought in. The rules, aimed at restricting marketing that targets the under-18s, would mean that sportspeople and reality TV stars could not take part in betting and gambling ads. Recent gambling ads have featured the likes of Harry Redknapp and José Mourinho. Some celebrities with whom younger audiences might not identify, such as Ray Winstone (Bet365), would not be affected. At present, gambling and betting ads mustn't appear in any media where more than a quarter of the audience is under 18.

theguardian.com, 22 October 2020 (Sweney)

What next for travel agencies?

Research from the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) reveals that the sector accounts for 10% of global GDP as well as one in ten jobs. However, the industry has been "uniquely exposed" to the ravages of the pandemic, which could also change the future of the travel agency business. This article examines the implications of new trends in the travel agency business of the future and identifies three that are likely to aid recovery: traveller behaviour; building customer confidence; and innovation and technology. Communication, marketing and positioning will be particularly critical to success as businesses try to reassure travellers. The article includes links to relevant sources.

worldtraveltourismcouncil.medium.com, 15 October 2020

Materials and mining

White paint could replace air conditioners

Scientists have developed a new type of white paint which they claim can keep surfaces 7.7°C cooler than its surroundings. The paint would help to eliminate the need for air conditioners and reduce

their impact on the environment. The new acrylic has been developed from calcium carbonate, which is found in rocks and seashells. Normal paint absorbs sunlight, which makes buildings warmer but this one radiates heat into space. The scientists, from Perdue University, Indiana, claim that most "heat-rejecting paints" reflect 80% to 90% of sunlight but this one reflects 95.5%.

energynews.com, 26 October 2020 (Mavrokefalidis)

Media

Books

People rediscovering reading

Publisher Bloomsbury has reported its best half-year profits since 2008, which have risen by 60% from February to August. Nigel Newton, founder and CEO, said that although it had had to close all its shops back in March, both online book sales and e-book revenues had risen "significantly" as people "rediscovered the pleasure of reading" during lockdown. He identifies books reflecting hope, such as *Humankind* by Rutger Bregman; social issues, epitomised in *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People about Race*; and cookery books, as key trends. Bloomsbury also reports a 47% rise in sales at its digital division, reflecting the switch to digital products by academic institutions.

bbc.co.uk/news, 27 October 2020

Merger of publishing entities

Cambridge University Press and Cambridge Assessment are set to merge at a time when learners, researchers and teachers are all looking for an innovative and digital approach to digesting academic literature.

The Bookseller, 20 October 2020

Games

Entertainment in Asda stores

The Entertainer toy store giant is partnering with Asda to supply a 'store within a store' concession area to five of its stores. Leading brands, including Lego, Paw Patrol and Disney, will be available and The Entertainer will be responsible for the range, merchandising and pricing.

The Grocer, 14 October 2020

Social media

Influencer market

The legal aspects of branding and influencer marketing are covered in this video from Gowling. It examines the changes taking place during the pandemic with examples such as KFC, Audi and a Netflix spoof, and how brands are releasing recipes and engaging with user generated content. It also looks at reputational issues and complaints delivered to the ASA. In another article, a London-based baker blogs about how she is tired of influencers asking for

free cake although some influencers say they consider asking for free gifts to be disrespectful.

[Gowling](#), 19 October 2020; [bbc.co.uk/news](#), 17 October 2020

Television

Netflix fortunes changed by the pandemic

Earlier this year growth in online entertainment surged due to the pandemic. However, in the three months to 30 September, Netflix attracted just 2.2m new subscribers to its service, well below its forecast of 2.5m. Netflix says it is still on track to gain a record 34m new subscribers this year. It relies heavily on international subscribers which already exceed those in its domestic market of the US. The strongest growth has been in the Asia-Pacific region which accounts for over one million new subscribers for the period. Yet most revenue per user still derives from the US which makes the home market critical, especially in the face of competition from Disney, HBO and others. A major challenge for Netflix and its rivals is how to acquire new content following TV and film production lockdowns in the spring.

[bbc.co.uk/news](#), 21 October 2020

Streaming services – TV adspend up

Although many advertisers have cut back on their spending this year, streaming services seem to have retained their marketing investment. In the first half of the year, streaming services attracted around \$1 billion in TV advertising compared with last year's spend of \$328m. Amazon was the largest spender, splashing out \$169.8m on TV ads for Amazon Prime Video during the first half of 2020. Meanwhile, Disney-owned networks, such as ABC, FX and ESPN, have been promoting Disney+ and Hulu. By contrast, Netflix is not among the top ten streaming services for TV adspend. It actually reduced its TV spend by 17.6% in the first half, year-on-year. Instead, it is using tactics such as offering movies and shows free to nonsubscribers to try to hook them into TV series. It is also using Facebook and YouTube for marketing. Others, such as NBCUniversal, are using podcasts.

[emarketer.com](#), 21 October 2020 (Benes)

Packaging

Consumers interested in canned water

There is growing interest among British consumers for buying water in cans, according to research commissioned by Ball Corporation, the aluminium can company. The YouGov poll found that 79% of UK adults surveyed agreed "that as businesses return to usual, this is a valuable opportunity for retailers and brands to reconsider their approach to packaging" and to "consider the environment" (75%). Plastic bottles are still the most commonly purchased packaging for "on-the-go" water but 55%

of respondents said they would be more likely to buy water in a can if they knew that it was "infinitely" recyclable.

[packagingnews.co.uk](#), 16 October 2020 (Qureshi)

Algorithms to help decision making

I am sure we have all had an Amazon order that seems to be packaged in an oversized box. Now Amazon is addressing its wastefulness by using machine-learning to work out what packaging is needed for any selection of items. It has also moved from boxes to padded mailers although there are concerns that plastic mailers cannot be recycled curb side. However, Amazon is now working on an all paper mailer that is fully recyclable and the algorithms are now in place to help the packer make the right decisions.

[fastcompany.com](#), 19 October 2020

Steel packaging – the European Green Deal

The European Green Deal, which aims for a climate-neutral EU by 2050, is underpinned by the Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP), which proposes measures such as restrictions on the use of some packaging materials, especially where there are alternative, reusable products available. Here Alexis Van Maercke, secretary general of the Association of European Producers of Steel for Packaging, makes the case for steel packaging which he says is the most recycled material in the world.

[packagingeurope.com](#), 16 October 2020 (Van Maercke)

Retailing

Record shop closures in first half of 2020

The first six months of 2020 saw a record number of shop closures on UK high streets, with 11,120 chain store outlets shutting, according to the Local Data Company and PwC. While 5,000 shops reopened during the period, there was still a net decline of 6,001. High streets have been in the doldrums for a long time: last year shops were closing at the rate of 16 a day. York has been the worst affected, losing 55 shops while the least affected areas have been Weymouth (+2), Warminster (+2) and South Harrow (+2). There are some grounds for optimism. Lisa Hooker, consumer markets leader at PwC, believes that "whatever happens retail will come out of this smaller and stronger".

[bbc.co.uk/news](#), 18 October 2020 (Simpson)

Retail sales, September 2020

This House of Commons Library briefing summarises the state of retail in Great Britain as of September 2020. During the month, retail sales rose to £7.7 billion per week from £7.6 billion in August. In the three months to September volume sales in food stores rose by 3.2% year-on-year but the volume of sales in non-food stores fell by 3% for the period. Clothing sales suffered the most, with September

sales volumes 12.7% below those of February 2020. By way of contrast, online sales were up by 53% in September, representing 27.5% of all retail sales. The article includes links to the original sources.

commonslibrary.parliament.uk, 23 October 2020 (Hutton)

Convenience stores must adapt to benefit

Corner shops are local, open long hours and are small enough that customers don't have to spend too long in them, which has made them ideal destinations during the pandemic. However, their fortunes have varied enormously. In Japan, for example, they have been in decline while in China the average value per store transaction rose by 120% during the height of the pandemic. Britain's Co-op Group saw sales rise by 8% in the first half of the year. Convenience stores suffer from serious competition in the form of services like Deliveroo. Stores must adapt to changing ideas of convenience, says Euromonitor's Amanda Bourlier.

economist.com, 17 October 2020

Services

Hospitality businesses at risk of insolvency

Over a third of British hospitality companies are on the verge of going out of business because of social distancing and local lockdown restrictions. This is according to an ONS report which reveals that 17% of food and accommodation businesses face a "severe" risk of insolvency, 21% says the risk is "moderate" and 29% say there is at least a moderate risk.

marketingweek.com, 23 October 2020

Royal Mail in home parcel pick up service

Royal Mail has launched a new service for collecting parcels from people's homes in an attempt to gain a larger share of the market. Although parcel deliveries have risen over recent years, Royal Mail is expected to make a loss this year. It is entering a competitive market in which rivals such as Hermes and DHL are already offering a parcel-collection service. Royal Mail's Parcel Collect will operate every day except Sunday at a charge of 72p a package. People running business from home will also be able to use the service. However, analyst Nicholas Hyett says the new service will require "significant" investment and "a high degree of planning and organisation" which Royal Mail has sometimes failed to achieve.

bbc.co.uk/news, 22 October 2020 (Espiner)

Transport and travel

Aerospace has worst ever quarter

It has been the worst quarter on record for the world's aerospace industry, with aircraft manufacturers receiving just 13 orders in July and August and none at all in September, compared with

152 in the same quarter last year, according to defence lobby group ADS. In the UK at least 12,000 (around 10%) aerospace workers are being made redundant or are at risk of losing their jobs. Many job losses will be sustained by Airbus and Rolls-Royce, although the supply chain will also be hit, with smaller companies forced to reduce their workforces.

theguardian.com, 26 October 2020 (Jolly)

Carmakers race to meet emissions targets

Prior to the onset of the coronavirus, one of the main concerns for European carmakers was meeting the EU's strict emissions targets which were phased in at the beginning of the year and pose the threat of huge fines for non-compliance. Carmakers have been using different strategies to ensure they don't breach the rules. However, because the pandemic led to dealership closures and a 30% downturn in European car sales this year, it began to look very much as though manufacturers would not make the deadline of the end of October. Some would be faced with buying credits from those that had achieved the required standard. Now data suggest that subsidies for electric vehicles, especially in Germany, have helped laggards in emissions compliance, such as Daimler, to catch up.

ft.com, 23 October 2020 (Miller)

Pods – driverless goods delivery

A driverless goods vehicle, known as The Pod, has been made by Einride, a Swedish firm. Founder Robert Flack believes that vehicle autonomy technology has evolved enough for driverless goods vehicles to be viable. Some Pods are already being tested out in travelling between warehouses and delivering goods for Lidl. The distinction between it and other driverless vehicles is that the driver sits back at HQ rather than in the vehicle. There are plans for one person to eventually control up to ten Pods but convincing regulators that they are suitable for the open road could be a barrier. If successful, Pods could change the way in which goods are delivered.

economist.com, 20 October 2020

Written by CIM's Knowledge Services Team

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