

Cutting Edge: Our weekly analysis of marketing news

3 February 2021

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

Quick [links](#) to sections

Marketing trends and issues

Advertising

Digital to make up 50% of global adspend

This year global adspend will grow by 5.8%, according to the latest *Dentsu Ad Spend Report* which covers 59 markets. It predicts that Latin America (10.2%), Western Europe (7.5%), Asia-Pacific (5.9%) and North America (4.0%) will see the highest growth thanks to rising investment in countries such as India, the UK and France. Digital will generate half of all adspend for the first time. There is optimism for the hardest-hit industry sectors, which Dentsu predicts will experience the highest growth, such as travel and transport (up 28.4%) and entertainment (up 14.5%). TV, which will benefit from the return of live events, such as the Tokyo Olympics and the UEFA Euro 2020, is expected to reach \$169 billion or 29% of all global ad spend.

[campaignlive.co.uk](https://www.dentsu.com/reports/ad-spend-january-2021-asa), 28 January 2021 (Sachitanand);
<https://www.dentsu.com/reports/ad-spend-january-2021-asa>

Most B2B ads are ineffective says new study

New research suggests that B2B advertising is "ineffective", with 75% of ads scoring just one star or less. This is according to a study from the LinkedIn B2B Institute and market research agency System1. A one-star rating means that the ad is contributing nothing towards long-term market share growth. Yet five-star ads (scoring highly on emotion, fluency and intensity) can help brands grow by an average of 3% over the long term. B2B, which tends to be product, engineering or sales driven, has much to learn from B2C, which is usually marketing led. Jon Lombardo and Peter Weinberg of the LinkedIn B2B Institute believe the new research gives B2B marketers the data needed to make a

business case for advertising that will help with future growth.

[marketingweek.com](https://www.marketingweek.com), 28 January 2021 (Rogers)

Agencies

Indies – here to stay

In 2007 Pizza company Domino's formed a successful agency partnership with Crispin Porter+Bogusky (CPB), but in November last year it swapped to a small, independent agency called WorkInProgress. Domino's CMO Art D'Elia says that, "the independent agency model gives us more flexibility and less distractions". Over the years many independent agencies have been swallowed up by the five major holding companies which were based on the model of providing a one-stop shop for a full range of capabilities. Now we are seeing the emergence of a raft of small independent agencies and the pandemic has accelerated the willingness of brands to turn to these smaller agencies. Another trend is for a lot of ad work to be done on a project-by-project basis rather than by big agencies that are held on retainers. WorkInProgress chief creative officer Matt Talbot says he doesn't see the reappearance of indies as a trend but rather as something that is "here to stay".

[fastcompany.com](https://www.fastcompany.com), 25 January 2021 (Beer)

Brands and branding

Consumers more aware of brand purpose

The European public is becoming more aware of the way in which brands look beyond marketing and advertising to other issues. Some 62% of internet users in Europe thought that brands should be running campaigns related to the pandemic, according to a May 2020 survey of internet users in Europe by GlobalWebIndex. On the other hand, brands that don't respond as expected, or are linked with negative actions, can quickly lose consumer approval. For example, US brands suffered as the

coronavirus spread amid little sign of action from the Government. In European markets, at least 37% of adults in a poll by Morning Consult said they felt less favourable towards US brands. "More consumers will be keeping an eye on retailers' ethical credentials", according to eMarketer principal analysts Karin von Abrams. Consumers think that brands' ethically responsible behaviour "should be a long-term commitment" he says.

emarketer.com, 25 January 2021 (von Abrams and Ceurvels)

Apple regains top place for brand value

Apple has reclaimed its position as the world's most valuable brand in the *Brand Finance Global 500* 2021. Following an 87% rise in brand value to \$243.4 billion, it has returned to the top spot after an absence of five years. Apple is noted for its ability to look beyond the iPhone by diversifying into services such as the App Store, iCloud, Podcasts and Apple TV. David Haigh, Brand Finance CEO, says that innovation is "built into the Brand's DNA". Amazon, in second place, grew by 15% in value while Google's value rose by just 1%, which it blamed on falling ad revenues. Tesla saw the fastest growth in brand value, growing by 158% to \$32 billion. However, traditional auto brands suffered, with Mercedes-Benz' value falling by 10%.

marketingweek.com, 27 January 2021

Conferences and events

Business travel – safe destinations

Tim Clark, Emirates' CEO, believes that Zoom meetings do not spell the end for business travel. In fact, he predicts that global passenger numbers will return to 2019 levels (four billion) over the next two to three years. However, recovery will be slow as infection rates in the US and western Europe are high and it could be years before the meetings and conferences sector fully recovers. The challenge is to be known as a "safe space" with low Covid rates, where meetings and conferences can be held. Singapore and Dubai are two such destinations. Having been cancelled twice last year, the World Economic Forum has now shifted its location to Singapore in May.

wired.co.uk, 26 January 2021 (Arlidge)

Meetings – tapping into that sense of progress

Those who organise meetings should ask themselves why they are meeting, who needs to attend, what conversation needs to take place and how you can create an environment in which that conversation can happen. Many people attending a meeting are already disengaged and the challenge is to overcome this apathy. Leaders who are used to hosting high-engagement meetings will use the conversation as an opportunity for real work and cancel the meeting if there is no real work to be done. In this way, they tap into "a sense of

progress", which is a big source of team motivation. Here are three ways to set about achieving this goal.
strategy-business.com, 26 January 2021 (Doty)

Consumer behaviour

Are consumers more giving after promotions

Researchers have found that price promotions can positively influence consumer donation behaviour because the savings from the promotion boost the consumer's perceived resources. They also found that the positive effect of price promotions on donation behaviour was enhanced when consumers focused on the amount they had saved, when the purchase was within budget and when they saw immediate monetary savings. The research showed that charities can benefit most when they ask for help immediately after price promotions. The study, which appears in the *Journal of Marketing* (Zhang et al) helps to explain the \$2.47 billion given to charitable causes on Giving Tuesday (which took place in the US after Black Friday and Cyber Monday) last year.

ama.org, 21 January 2021 (Zhang et al)

Psychological ownership – prosocial behaviour

This study investigates how psychological ownership goes beyond the consumer's relationship with the possession to influence other behaviours, such as altruism. The authors conducted seven studies and proposed that psychological ownership boosts prosocial behaviour because it raises self-esteem and people's willingness to help. They found that materialism and "mine-me" sensitivity moderated this effect.

Journal of Consumer Research, Vol 47(5), February 2021, pp698-715 (Jami et al)

Customer relations

Covid fatigues leads to CX intolerance

Consumers may have been tolerant of inconsistent customer service at the start of the coronavirus, but they are beginning to get "pandemic fatigue" and will no longer accept the pandemic as an excuse for poor service. This is according to a report from Experian, which reveals that 60% of people have higher expectations of a digital experience now than before the start of the pandemic. The report has identified some initiatives that retail banks, payment providers and retailers should take to help with their digital transformation. But the research suggests that customer loyalty could be at risk: while two-thirds of customers have remained loyal to their favourite brands during the pandemic, the move to digital makes it a lot easier to switch brands. Brands need to show they care and be willing to communicate with customers.

CRM Magazine, Vol 25(1), January-February 2021, p18 (Britt)

Direct marketing

Marketing automation for direct mail

Although the UK lags behind other countries when it comes to automation, marketing as a sector is an enthusiastic adopter of technology and automation. A recent survey of companies with over 250 employees showed that 80% already had some form of marketing automation system. According to Gartner, martech investment has risen to 29% of the CMO's budget, up from 22% in 2017. This article discusses automated marketing and the customer experience, and using marketing automation for cross-media campaigns. It focuses on bringing direct mail into an omnichannel marketing campaign and how automated marketing works with direct mail. It also gives some advice on choosing the right automation partner.

dma.org.uk, 1 February 2021 (Ricketts)

Law

Adtech – regulatory environment

This *Adtech regulatory roundup* from law firm Reed Smith, summarises the main adtech developments that it expects to see this year across the UK, Germany, France and the US, with a particular focus on privacy issues. The UK section covers: Brexit; privacy and electronic communications regulations; data protection changes; new ICO codes of practice; the new Digital Markets Unit; and case law and enforcement.

[lexology.com](https://www.lexology.com), 22 January 2021 (Tardiff et al);
<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?q=8973269a-306a-48d3-9b19-0e50a6647d96>

EU issues guidelines on facial recognition

The Council of Europe, Europe's human rights watchdog, has published new guidelines for governments and companies that are considering using facial recognition technologies. Facial recognition will be prohibited in cases where the technology is used to determine a person's skin colour, religion, sex, ethnic origin, age, health or social status unless the use is necessary and proportionate. The same ban will apply to digital tools that recognise emotions, personality traits or mental health conditions and which can be used to influence hiring, insurance or education. So far, the guidelines are not binding, but represent the most wide-ranging set of proposals so far with regard to regulating facial recognition in Europe.

zdnet.com, 28 January 2021 (Leprince-Ringuet)

Marketing

Definition and benefits of digital marketing

It can be difficult to know where to start with digital marketing. Here digital marketing is defined as, "the use of the Internet, mobile devices, social media, search engines, and other channels to reach consumers." The author examines the three most common types of digital marketing and their

benefits: content marketing, email marketing and social media marketing; but points out that there are many more, such as affiliate, SEO, PPC, etc. With so many options available, it is essential to think carefully about your goals before embarking on a course of action.

business2community.com, 25 January 2021 (Reyes)

Marketers will spend more this year

Some 65% of marketers plan to increase their marketing spend this year, according to a member survey by the CMO Council. Only 10% said they would reduce their marketing budgets compared with last year, while 24% expect to maintain their current level of investment. Marketers made significant savings last year because of the cancellation of events and tradeshow, which take up around 25% of budgets. They will be reinvesting the money in technology, automation and transformation, according to CMO Council director Donovan Neale-May. They are also investing in the skillsets needed for tech and digital. Neale-May notes that marketers may not return to events and trade shows as much as before the pandemic because of their "lack of transparency and measurability". Moreover, as marketers become more customer-centric, agencies could lose their prominent role in the marketing organisation because they don't own the customer database.

campaignlive.co.uk, 28 January 2021 (Weissbrot)

CMOs expect changing roles in 2021

LinkedIn research reveals that almost three-quarters of CMOs expect their role to change this year because of the pandemic. Some 58% said they would increasingly have to support other functions while 48% expect to have more influence at board level. While 87% said the pandemic had reinforced the need for agility, 60% were concerned about the risk of prioritising agility over strategy. Tom Pepper of LinkedIn, says that "Upskilling will be an important focus for CMOs this year" and "the savviest will also know when to bring in extra talent".

marketingweek.com, 1 February 2021

Persona-based marketing

Account-based marketing (ABM) requires a good understanding of the companies you are targeting, such as business initiatives and industry trends. But it is important to remember that you are marketing to people: your campaign could fall flat if you don't consider the personas involved and make your approach more human. Here are four tips to optimise your persona marketing strategy. Advice includes starting with one target vertical and identifying roles by labelling each one as a champion, influencer or decision-maker; then match

your multichannel messaging to the personas and follow-up when needed.

b2bmarketing.net, 1 February 2021 (Jackson)

Market research

The seven data dimensions

Most brands understand the value of data but many are unsure about the dimensions of value that it can deliver to their operations. This is the first of a seven-part series devoted to the seven datasets that most brands have access to and that can be used to gain insight for delivering strategies, tactics, experiences and innovation. The article starts by reviewing what it calls the "magnificent seven" data dimensions and the general insights they can offer to an organisation. These are: social engagement channels, online reviews, customer feedback, purchase data, customer service information, search intelligence and employee feedback.

researchworld.com, 27 January 2021 (Beale)

Don't take numbers at face value

Numbers crop up time and again in market research but many people don't understand them and they certainly shouldn't be taken at face value. The author sets out some of her favourite rules from a 2008 book entitled *The Tiger That isn't: Seeing Through a World of Numbers* (Blastland and Dilnot). She points out that definitions can be difficult. For example, Margaret Thatcher's Government changed the definition of "unemployment" 23 times! You should also set the number in context: numbers containing multiple zeros are often used to reinforce arguments, especially with public sector data. As Blastland and Dilnot said: "No number is big or small until we know more about it". The central message is to question everything, see the entire picture and develop some digging skills! Purchase [The Tiger That isn't](#) by Blastland and Dilnot.

research-live.com 27 January 2021 (Blakeley)

Public relations

A new PR approach to globalisation

Despite the pandemic, globalisation continues, but there is a new type of globalisation as the emphasis shifts from goods to services. These days knowledge process outsourcing (KPO) creates more business growth around the world than the consumption of Coke. But has PR kept up with this trend? PR has been global for a long time, either through international firms or independent agencies passing work to each other, but these are not necessarily the best models. The growth of digital commerce calls for PR support that is more integrated, flexible and efficient across borders, cultures and languages. Here is some advice for PR pros working in today's globalised economy.

prdaily.com, 29 January 2021 (Illingworth)

Sponsorship

Sponsorship trends during the pandemic

Each year the European Sponsorship Organisation (ESA) asks its members what they think will be the top three trends for the coming year. When the pandemic arrived in March 2020, it asked what key trends would define the way in which sponsorship will recover and it asked the question again in October. This article describes how the top ten trends have changed over the course of the year to reflect shifting priorities. In January sustainability became the new top trend while fan engagement moved up eight places to number two. However, by April 2020 digital had risen to the top, followed by community/CSR and e-sports, reflecting lockdown preferences. Meanwhile sustainability had fallen to sixth place. By October 2020 digital activation was in top spot, followed by audiences in venues; while community/CSR had fallen to fifth place and sustainability had disappeared altogether.

sponsorship.org, January 2021

Ban on gambling shirt sponsorship

The UK Government is reportedly keen to "press ahead" with a potential ban on gambling company shirt sponsorship. Betting sponsorship is common in football, with ten out of 20 Premier League clubs having partnerships with betting companies. The betting shirt sponsorship market is worth £110m for the Premier League and Championship. In July a House of Lords committee called for a ban on gambling sponsorship in sport as part of other recommendations to curb gambling. A ban could be introduced as early as this autumn. Last November Spain approved measures to restrict gambling sponsorship in domestic sport.

sportbusiness.com, 27 January 2021

Agriculture, fishing and forestry

Brexit – slowdown in animal exports to EU

Food groups are concerned that exports to the EU have become "glacially slow", with many small businesses deciding to pull out of Europe altogether. As well as increased bureaucracy, health certificates for meat and dairy are costing up to £200 per load. Poultry has been the worst affected and January sales to the EU have fallen by 20% compared with January 2020. Defra officials have said that around 250 health certificates a day are being issued for EU exports plus 75 for other markets. Yet Defra secretary George Eustice said in September that 300,000 certificates would be needed each year. It appears that the number of vets qualified to sign export health certificates needs to be ramped up.

thegrocer.co.uk, 29 January 2021 (Holmes)

Trust in farming rises

A new report from the AHDB reveals that 66% of people feel very or somewhat positive about British agriculture, up by 4% on the previous year. The AHDB report, *Trust in Farming and the Environment*, suggests that most people also view farming positively with regard to the environment, with just 15% believing it to have a negative impact. However, consumers would like farmers to do more for the environment, such as planting trees, sustainability labelling and greater efficiency. Farmers have also been named as the most trusted group within the food industry by European consumers, according to a study by the University of Reading. Its *EIT Food Trust Report* found that farmers are trusted by 67% of consumers.

fginsight.com, 29 January 2021 (Black)

Februdairy kicks off

Farmers have started their annual #Februdairy campaign aimed at promoting the dairy industry to a wider audience on social media. Nutritionists will educate the public on the health benefits of dairy such as the presence of nutrients. Despite a difficult year, there have been some positives for the dairy industry. The UK's first TV dairy campaign in 20 years led to the sale of an additional 11.2m litres of liquid milk while lockdown also saw increased demand for the traditional milkman.

farminguk.com, 1 February 2021

Building industry

One in eight firms could go under

According to an ONS survey of 3,568 construction firms, one in eight have little or no confidence that they will survive until the end of April. Analysts cite the lack of new jobs, the rising cost of materials, labour shortages and lower productivity due to social distancing as factors in the downturn. This lack of confidence has worsened over recent weeks, according to the research. Chris Davies, DRS Bond Management director, points to construction SMEs being at most risk in the current environment and warns that insolvencies could rise during the course of the year. However, he believes that the second half of the year could improve as the economy opens up, especially in the housing repair, infrastructure and residential sectors.

constructionnews.co.uk, 1 February 2021 (Price)

Designing for the local vernacular

The UK Government is proposing to change national planning policy to place more emphasis on "beauty and place-making", with new streets having trees planted along them. The Ministry of Housing has published for consultation a national model design code outlining the new standards. Local councils will produce their own design codes based on local vernacular architecture and the new Office for Place

will oversee local standards. The measures respond to the *Living in Beauty* report produced by the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission in January last year.

theconstructionindex.co.uk, 1 February 2021

Businesses and strategy

Communication overload – what to do about it

People use a plethora of communication tools every day and this can be stressful. According to a recent survey, 75% of people agree that working from home has increased their feeling of digital overload. Previous studies have shown that "techno-stressors" can result in reduced work satisfaction and burnout so it is essential to put some controls in place to deal with digital overload. Here are some steps you can follow: start by conducting an audit of what you use; then get some feedback from other employees about what they use; examine the best use for each tool; build a channel strategy; and adapt your communication style according to the platform.

fastcompany.com, 29 January 2021 (Moran)

How will the C-suite look this year?

The pandemic has probably changed the nature of the workplace for the long term, but how many senior executives may decide not to go back to the office full time? Many executives have reconnected with their families over the past year by being able to control their schedules and work flexibly. Yet senior roles in big companies have traditionally involved long hours and business travel although these are not necessarily prerequisites for good performance. There are already signs that high-level people are resisting being relocated to another city or country because they can work remotely instead. Leaders of organisations are advised to prepare for this change, they should stop looking upon a full office as a "proxy for productivity" and shift their focus from "putting in the hours" to work that makes a difference.

strategy-business.com, 22 January 2021 (Bryant)

Creating value through employee capabilities

Companies that place equal emphasis on both their performance and health outperform their peers threefold. Leaders can create even more value when they focus on performance and health at both organisation and individual levels. It means embedding this new way of working in all layers of the business which in turn requires building individual employee capabilities in four key areas: teaching them the business ("how we make money"); teaching them management ("how we run the place"); enabling technical and functional skills for the job to be done ("how I add value"); and developing them personally ("how I behave").

mckinsey.com, 25 January 2021 (DiLeonardo et al)

Charities and NGOs

A guide to using big data

To benefit from big data, charities need: the desire to carry out analytics; have a store of data to analyse; and the digital tools to do big data analytics so that they can derive insights from the data. This article includes some simple advice on how to use big data for fundraising, to increase reach, make a bigger impact and influence government policies. It also looks at sources of data and the digital tools needed for analytics, with links to organisations and businesses that can help.

charitydigital.org.uk, 29 January 2021 (Rubens)

Growing revenues

US charities support non-profit hospitals, theatres, schools, food banks and other non-profit institutions. Yet the sector is coming under increasing pressure to find ways of increasing their revenues. There are three revenue sources that non-profits could consider which are to: offer free and paid services by client segment; invest in premium services; and align product innovation to market needs. This article explores the options.

ama.org, 26 January 2021 (Chen)

Economy

Over one in seven businesses at risk

More than one in seven businesses (nearly 15%) are at risk of "imminent closure" when business support schemes finish at the end of March or April, according to LSE's Centre for Economic Performance (CEP) and the Alliance for Full Employment (AFFE). Micro-businesses, with fewer than ten employees, are at particular risk. The CEP warns that, without government support measures, business closures could be over three times higher by the end of Q1 2021 than in Q1 2019. The report, entitled: *A major wave of UK business closures by April 2021? The scale of the problem and what can be done*, has a forward by former PM Gordon Brown. It recommends a range of measures, such as loan subsidies, debt restructuring, and new collaboration between government and banks.

lse.ac.uk, 27 January 2021 (Van Reenan);

<https://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/cepcovid-19-016.pdf>

GDP – international comparisons

UK GDP for Q3 2020 fell by 8.6% compared with the same quarter in 2019; GDP fell by 4.3% in the Eurozone and 2.8% in the US for the same period, according to the OECD. The IMF's latest forecasts, published on 26 January, predict that world growth will improve slightly. While it believes that UK GDP fell by 10% last year, it forecasts a 4.5% rise in 2021. The OECD, by contrast, predicts an 11.2% fall in UK GDP for 2020 and 4.2% growth this year.

There are links to the original sources of data and charts give international comparisons.

commonslibrary.parliament.uk, 27 January 2021 (Harari)

Education

Higher education funding – England

In 2015 the then chancellor, George Osborne announced the biggest changes to student finance in England since 2012. In 2018 PM Theresa May announced a review of post-18 education and funding. This article examines how the changes have affected the balance between taxpayer funding and graduate loans and how total funding from all sources has changed for universities. On 21 January the UK Government published its "interim conclusions" to the review. This paper provides links to the various reports.

commonslibrary.parliament.uk, 27 January 2021 (Bolton)

A whole skills approach to recovery

Greg Wade, Universities UK's head of policy for innovation, growth, employability and skills, responds to the UK Government's recent *Skills for jobs* white paper. The past year has placed a strain on people skills in the existing workforce and the future skills needed for the economy. There is also a need to reduce unemployment. The white paper covers funding for further education; strengthening collaboration between skills providers and employers; meeting the needs of local companies; and increasing choice and flexibility. This article looks at where universities fit into all this and proposes a "whole skills" approach.

universitiesuk.ac.uk, 29 January 2021 (Wade)

Energy and utilities

Britain reaches 10 million smart meter mark

Britain has installed its ten millionth smart metre, a milestone in smart meter infrastructure rollout, according to the Data Communications Company. These ten million meters alone could be preventing 275,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year, it is estimated. The data also suggest that households with smart meters can reduce their energy consumption by around 2%.

energylivenews.com, 2 February 2021 (Mavrokefalidis)

Almost 6 million customers switched last year

The latest energy switching figures from Energy UK reveal that almost six million customers changed their supplier last year. This was slightly down on 2019, a record year in which 6.4m customers changed their supplier. Emma Pinchbeck, Energy UK chief executive notes that, while it is encouraging to see people shopping around for the best deal, the best way to save on energy bills is to improve efficiency in the home. A detailed breakdown of energy switching figures is provided on the Energy

UK website.

energy-uk.org.uk, 21 January 2021;
<https://www.energy-uk.org.uk/publication/293-research-and-reports/switchingreports.html>

Environment

40% of green claims could be deceptive

As much as 40% of brands' green claims could be misleading, according to the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network's (ICPEN) annual examination of websites. The sweep of international websites, led by the UK's CMA and the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets, analysed 500 websites across various sectors. Some of the misleading tactics included: vague claims and a lack of clarity through the use of words such as "eco" or "natural"; the use of brand eco logos and labels; and the lack of disclosure in areas such as a brand's pollution levels, which might detract from their green claims. The CMA has recently launched its own investigation into misleading environmental claims.

lexology.com, 28 January 2021 (Bradley);
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/global-sweep-finds-40-of-firms-green-claims-could-be-misleading>;
<https://www.gov.uk/cma-cases/misleading-environmental-claims> 2 November 2021

Natural climate solutions – investing in nature

A new report from McKinsey and the World Economic Forum looks at the role that natural climate solutions can play in tackling climate change. There is rising awareness that the changing climate and the loss of nature are "inextricably linked". Natural climate solutions (NCS) – conservation, restoration and land-management – help to address these crises and improve resilience. The joint paper argues that there is no clear way to address climate change without investing in nature. The paper proposes six steps to overcoming difficulties in the effectiveness of NCS. It points out that NCS offers huge opportunities for the private sector and mentions initiatives from the likes of Amazon, Nestlé and Shell.

mckinsey.com, 25 January 2021 (Aminetzah et al)

Fashion

H&M – polluter or problem-solver?

Around 92m tons of clothing are thrown away every year. Fast fashion group H&M produces three billion garments a year and in 2019 had \$4.1 billion-worth of unsold clothing. The H&M Foundation, created seven years ago, aims to tackle humanitarian and environmental issues in the fashion industry. Now it is investing \$100m in new technology called the Green Machine which could enable consumers to recycle clothes in the same way that they do Coke cans. It is integral to H&M's efforts to shift its image from that of a major polluter to a "problem-solver". Experts believe that to lessen its impact on the

environment, H&M must reduce the amount of clothing it produces but so far it has appeared reluctant.

fastcompany.com, 27 January 2021 (Segran)

Logo blunders

Although there have been many disastrous logos over the years, few have elicited a complaint to the police, but this is what has happened to Indian fashion website Myntra. Its logo was reported to Mumbai police's cyber-crime department as being "insulting and offensive towards women". The logo took the form of a pink and orange "M" which the complainant claimed "resembled a naked woman". Although the logo has now been subtly modified, it is still so similar that it is difficult to dissociate it from the initial mistake. It begs the question as to whether other "M" logos (Google's Gmail or McDonald's) could be misinterpreted! Other popular logos (depicted here) may not seem quite so innocent now...

creativebloq.com, 2 February 2021 (Piper)

Financial services

Cash hasn't gone just yet

Last year consumers shifted away from cash to the perceived safer option of contactless payments. Despite the growth of digital payments prior to the pandemic, most UK adults said they had used cash to pay for something in the three months to November 2019. The increase in the contactless limit to £45 in April last year has allowed contactless payments to expand, with new technology lowering the barriers to entry. By August 2020 a third of consumers said they rarely/never used cash. Even physical cards are becoming less relevant as people use contactless or shop online. It is unlikely that cash will disappear just yet as it makes it easier for people on lower incomes to budget. Some households have even been hoarding cash as additional protection in uncertain times. As hygiene concerns abate, we might just see a resurgence in the use of cash, at least in the short-term.

mintel.com, 11 January 2021 (Slide)

FCA to regulate buy now pay later schemes

There are concerns over buy now pay later schemes that are leading to rising debt, especially among young shoppers. Services such as Klarna, offered through major retailers, enable people to make gradual payments without paying interest. Last year buy now pay later services were used by five million people in the UK on total sales of £2.7 billion. Now the Financial Conduct Authority is looking to regulate the sector. The new plans include the requirement for providers to conduct affordability checks before lending.

bbc.co.uk/news, 2 February 2021 (Peachey)

South Korea trials face recognition ticketing

South Korea is testing out a face recognition payment system at Seoul Metro's Ui-Sinseol light transit system. The payment system automatically deducts the fare from the user's account as they pass through the gate while looking at the screen. The system, which has been developed by T-Money, claims to be able to accurately recognise users without the need for them to remove their mask!

nfcw.com, 25 January 2021 (Phillips)

FMCG

Beverages

Queer Brewing unveils first beers

Start-up Queer Brewing has just unveiled its first three beers which were brewed in partnership with Cloudwater, a Manchester craft brewery. The beer has been given a visual identity, "with the aim to create a space for LGBTQI+ people in the world of craft beer", says Lily Waite, the writer and artist who founded the brand. The brand won funding from Cloudwater as part of the brewer's Wayfinder incubator scheme for businesses that bring "lasting change" to craft beer.

thegrocer.co.uk, 1 February 2021 (Woolfson)

New range of hot drinks for mental wellbeing

A new hot drinks brand called Beau-T-Full Minds is to launch in April. The nine different varieties of tea and coffee contain active ingredients aimed at the drinker's mental wellbeing. The range includes Wide Awake Herbal Tea, CBD Herbal Tea, Immunity Herbal Tea and Lions Mane Coffee. The brand is backed by York-based tea company Ringtons and its supply chain partner Infusion GB.

thegrocer.co.uk, 29 January 2021 (Dawson)

Food

Supermarket live lamb in vegan ad

Vegan Friendly, a non-profit that campaigns for a plant-based diet, has launched a controversial ad featuring a live sheep in a supermarket. The ad features a couple searching for "extra fresh" lamb and being presented with a live lamb and the tagline: "Just because you can't see the victim's face doesn't mean there wasn't a victim". Vegan Friendly claims the original ad, shown in Israel, had turned "a couple of hundred thousand people vegan". Tom Bursnall, founder of plant-based Miami Burger, who has contributed to the UK ad, has criticised regulators like Clearcast as being flawed because they "mirror cultural norms". Clearcast originally had issues with the ad but has now approved it.

campaignlive.co.uk, 25 January 2021 (McGonagle)

Little Moons sales up in latest TikTok craze

Ice cream brand Little Moons has experienced the power of social media after it went viral on TikTok. Sales rose by 700% as TikTok users shared videos of themselves eating and buying the mochi ice cream balls. Videos using the hashtag #LittleMoons have gained over 19.5m views and sales have surged at all the major stockists. Co-founder of Little Moons Howard Wong says it shows how TikTok can, "exponentially grow awareness of a FMCG brand almost overnight".

thegrocer.co.uk, 1 February 2021 (Dawson)

Tobacco

Marijuana – the next "mega-brand"

The legalisation of marijuana is progressing across the US, with New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and other states set to allow recreational sales. This offers a big business opportunity for marketers. Katie Bayne, a former chief marketer of Coca-Cola, has joined the board of Acreage Holdings to work with Peter Capzini, formerly of Pfizer. They are part of a growing number of executives from blue-chip brands that have joined the cannabis sector. One of the industry's attractions is its fragmentation. There is no clear brand leader as yet and most people wouldn't know which brand to choose which opens the way for a mega-brand...

thedrum.com, 27 January 2021 (Hein)

Government and public sector

Government withdraws "sexist" ad

The Government has withdrawn a social media ad showing women doing all the household chores following accusations of sexism. The ad, which asked people to "Stay Home, Save Lives", depicts women ironing, cleaning and home-schooling while a man lounges on a sofa. The Government claims that the ad did "not reflect" its "view on women" but women's groups are not impressed, describing the perpetrators as "dinosaurs" and "embedded in the 1950s".

theguardian.com, 28 January 2021 (Topping)

Health and pharmaceuticals

Brands helping to vaccinate the world

Brands have been wading in to help the Covid-19 vaccination effort. BrewDog offered pub space and asked fans to name a new commemorative beer. Suggestions included "Community Immunity" and "Little Prick"! The last year has seen brand purpose come to the fore and there is growing expectation from consumers that brands will help with societal issues. A study by YouGov BrandIndex Data found that brands that are fast to offer their services for public health causes will be enhanced in the eyes of the public but attempts at virtue signalling are likely

to be negatively received. Another trend in the last year has been the power of collaboration, which has been particularly apparent among big pharma companies. The US's Ad Council has assembled a team of partners, agencies and content creators to help educate the public about the vaccine. However, Covid vaccination is a sensitive topic as Ryanair recently found out with its controversial "Jab and Go" ad.

thedrum.com, 28 January 2021

CAP targets prescription-only ads

The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) has published a new enforcement notice warning against the advertising of prescription-only medicines (POM). These are prevalent in the weight-loss sector in the form of "skinny pens" and "skinny pills" which are often seen on social media. Advertising such medicines to the public is in breach of the CAP code as well as the Human Medicines Regulations 2012. CAP advises companies not to make claims that people can lose a certain amount of weight within a particular time and not to advertise to people who are not overweight. If "problem" ads, carry on after 12 February, there will be targeted enforcement.

asa.org.uk, 28 January 2021;

<https://www.asa.org.uk/news/inject-a-dose-of-compliance-into-your-weight-loss-ads.html>

IT and telecoms

Computing on the edge

This article argues that edge computing, which takes place, not in centralised servers in the cloud, but on the "edge" of the network, will be critical for the success of the Internet of Things (IoT). The cloud has limitations, such as the time taken for data to travel and the ability to deploy devices to locations with little or no internet connection. In contrast, edge computing relocates servers closer to where the data is gathered, aided by accelerator chipsets developed by the likes of Nvidia and Intel. Edge computing will also allow more localised control over data and for more people to have access to AI solutions especially in areas of the world with limited connectivity. This year we can expect to see edge computing facilitating breakthroughs in medicine, transport, industry, agriculture and the home.

Wired, 25 January 2021 (Medich)

Chromebook demand is "through the roof"

The fourth quarter of 2020 saw PC shipments rise by 35% to 143.7m compared with the same quarter in 2019, according to research firm Canalys. PC shipments rose by 17% for the year as businesses and consumers acquired the tools for working and learning from home. Amazon shipped 6.5m tablets, while Lenovo, the fastest-growing, shipped 5.6m. Huawei suffered a 24% year-on-year decline, the only company to see a fall. Chromebooks were the biggest success story, with 235% year-on-year

growth led by HP. Canalys research director Rushabh Doshi said that: "Demand for Chromebooks is through the roof". However, they may well be challenged by Windows 10X, a lighter version of Windows, which due to launch this year.

znet.com, 29 January 2021 (Tung)

Apple – record Q1 revenues

Apple has reported record results for the first quarter of the financial year (ending 26 December 2020) with its highest-ever revenue of \$111.4 billion. This is 21% up on the same period in 2019. All the company's product categories achieved double-digit growth, according to Apple CFO Luca Maestri.

marketingweek.com, 28 January 2021

Leisure and tourism

Vertical theatre offer social distancing

The Vertical Theatre Group has designed a freestanding venue that enables people to be seated in social bubbles with natural ventilation. The "tourable" structures are modular so that each unit can contain between four and 12 people while the total venue can hold up to 2,400 people and is adaptable for social distancing rules. As well as theatre shows, the venues offer opportunities for brands to host launch events. For example, branded content could be broadcast alongside entertainment, enabling brands to play a part in helping the arts to recover.

campaignlive.co.uk, 29 January 2021 (Douglas)

The future of sports viewing

Most people still watch professional sport in the same way they did in the 1960s, namely through a live, one-way, linear broadcast. Now we are seeing changes that have been accelerated by the pandemic. The author has identified some concepts which he believes will transform the future of fandom and discusses ideas such as: a football or basketball game produced in a studio for off-site viewers; microgaming; simulated games; e-sports; and streaming services.

strategy-business.com, 25 January 2021 (Maney)

Staycations are where it's at in 2021

It's going to be another strong year for staycations. Consumers have been busy booking holidays in the UK due to concerns about travel restrictions. Domestic holiday companies have been seeing huge growth in bookings. Independent Cottages reports a 300% rise in traffic during this lockdown while holidaycottages.co.uk has seen 98% growth in summer holiday bookings compared with 2020.

marketingweek.com, 28 January 2021

Materials and mining

The future for oil-services companies

Last year demand for crude oil plummeted which left oil producers with less to invest in drilling infrastructure, which is usually outsourced to specialist oil-service companies. During the first half of 2020 the number of active rigs around the world fell by half to just over 1,000. Halliburton a large oil service firm, saw its revenues fall by 36%. It, along with Schlumberger and Baker Hughes, are the three largest service providers to the industry. All three believe that the future looks brighter but, in the meantime, they are expanding into “cleaner” ventures. Baker Hughes plans to acquire a carbon-capture company while Schlumberger has set up a “new energy” business unit.

economist.com, 30 January 2021

Media

Newspapers

National news brands to grow by 14%

The latest *Advertising Association/WARC Expenditure Report* forecasts that national news brands could grow by almost 14% in 2021, with digital likely to rise by 15%. Recovery could start to happen in the first quarter of the year but Q2 can expect to see a rapid (52%) rise in adspend compared to the same period last year. Denise Turner, insight director at Newsworks, believes that the positive outlook for news brands is helped by people looking for trusted sources of information that they can “rely on, and relate to”.

newsworks.org.uk, 25 January 2021

Podcasts

Big Tech’s move into podcasting

Podcasts are on the increase with WARC forecasting that 38% of marketers will increase podcast spend this year. Tech companies see audio streaming as a new advertising channel where they can lead the way. This article looks at what Big Tech is doing with podcasting: from Spotify, which recently became the world’s leading platform; to Apple, which is reportedly building a podcasting subscription product. It also examines how advertising fits in and what the advertising models are likely to look like.

thedrum.com, 28 January 2021 (McCarthy)

Radio

Radio in the time of pandemic

Radiocentre/DRG research into changes in listening habits during lockdown reveals that radio listening remained higher during the second lockdown than before the pandemic, especially for people working from home. Radio also appears to have played an important part in shopping habits among those new

to working at home. It was found to drive a 30% uplift in in-store purchase intent and a 52% rise in online brand browsing. Other research from Radiocentre and Ebiquty (*Re-Evaluating Media for Recovery*) ranks radio as second only to TV in terms of having important attributes for brands during times of uncertainty.

radiocentre.org, 28 January 2021

Social media

Ten B2B strategies for Instagram

B2B companies are experiencing the highest engagement ratio in social media platforms, such as Instagram, according to research from TrackMaven. Millennials spend a large proportion of their time on Instagram which gives marketers an opportunity to expand business sales. Instagram helps B2B through promotion, not only through posts, but by providing space for photos, text and videos. Here are ten B2B marketing strategies for use on Instagram which cover: the creation of an attractive Instagram feed; displaying the brand story; using influencer marketing; demonstrating team strength; using hashtags; explaining products and services; boosting traffic to your site; building trust; Instagram ad campaigns; and sharing client testimonials.

business2community, 21 January 2021 (Sharma)

Lead generation for small businesses

It is becoming increasingly important for marketers to include social media in their strategies. This article focuses on some of the primary concepts of social media, particularly for building social media audiences and lead generation for small businesses. Increasing shareability is one of the best ways of generating leads for a small business that doesn’t have a sales team, marketing budget or CRM system. This article defines what is meant by lead generation and social media acquisition and offers some advice on how a business can get its content shared. It goes on to discuss inbound vs outbound leads, lead qualification, and increasing the conversion rate.

business2community.com, 24 January 2021 (Chawlani)

The rise of memes

Social media memes have become an important part of digital communication over the past year. The pandemic has resulted in “an explosion of memetic content and consumption” on social media. Memes, and the humour associated with them, have become a type of escapism in times of crisis. A March 2020 survey from GlobalWebIndex showed that 32% of US and UK internet users had viewed a meme that day. The rise in meme engagement is partly down to people spending more time on social media since the start of the pandemic, but the US presidential election has been another driver. Memes also tap into trends that have been accelerated by the virus,

such as user-generated content and influencer marketing. It is likely that memes will migrate from social platforms to other media channels, including TV and newspapers, and then to marketing media plans...

[emarketer.com](#), 29 January 2021 (Enberg)

Television

Netflix reduces ad spend in 2020

Netflix reduced its global ad spend last year by 23% even though revenue rose by 24% and rivals, such as Disney+, were snapping at its heels. Netflix reports having cut ad expenses by \$432m to \$1.45 billion in 2020. Its advertising as a percentage of total revenue has fallen from 15% in 2018 to 9% in 2020. Its annual report notes that “word-of-mouth advertising from existing members” has helped to boost subscriber numbers. A Hollywood studio might typically spend between 50% and 100% of production budget on marketing but Netflix has “the scale and the recommendation engine” to make sure people keep coming back, says Ted Sarandos, Netflix co-chief executive and chief content officer.

[campaignlive.co.uk](#), 29 January 2021 (Spanier)

Packaging

Smarties launches all recyclable packaging

Smarties, a Nestlé brand, is launching recyclable paper packaging around the world and will complete the transition to paper in the UK and Ireland by April. It becomes the first global confectionery brand to move entirely to paper packaging and the shift forms part of Nestlé’s ambition to have only recyclable or reusable packaging by 2025. Smarties, which launched in 1937, contains no artificial colours, flavours or preservatives.

[foodanddrinktechnology.com](#), 28 January 2021

Lush packaging return scheme

Lush, the cosmetics retailer, has launched a “Bring it Back” scheme enabling customers to return full-sized plastic packaging to their local shop for recycling. Shoppers will receive a 50p deposit to spend in-store that day for every plastic item they return. The packaging will be sent to Greenhub, Lush’s recycling facilities from where it will be processed and sent elsewhere to be made into black Lush pots.

[packagingnews.co.uk](#), 2 February 2021 (Corbin)

Retailing

Asos buys four Arcadia brands

Asos has agreed to buy four brands – Topshop, Topman, Miss Selfridge and HIIT brands – from Arcadia group which fell into administration in November. It is paying £295m but this does not include the stores, around 70 of which are expected to close with the loss of 2,500 jobs. No mention has

been made about the future of the brands’ employees. Asos says it has acquired “strong consumer-facing brands” which will benefit from “investment into customer engagement and brand positioning in line with our existing model”. Asos has enjoyed strong sales during the pandemic.

[bbc.co.uk/news](#), 1 February 2021

Co-op expands robot delivery service

Following a successful launch in November, the Co-op is to expand its same-day robot delivery service in Northampton. People can order groceries from over a 1,000 food and drink items via the Starship Food Delivery app, and have them delivered by robot. The robots can travel up to three miles from the store. In 2018 the Co-op became the first UK retailer to trial robot deliveries in the Milton Keynes area, in partnership with Starship Technologies.

[retailtimes.co.uk](#), 2 February 2021 (Briggs)

Services

Meal kits – maintaining demand

Meal kit delivery services have, unsurprisingly, performed well during the pandemic but will they be able to keep the momentum going this year? By April 2020, almost half of consumers were limiting the amount of time they spent in stores which made meal kits an attractive option. But there are challenges to overcome if meal kits are to maintain their popularity. These include their high cost at a time when people might be cutting back and the likelihood that consumers will soon be out and about again as they get vaccinated. Here are some strategies that meal subscription companies could use to add value and gain more positive perceptions of their pricing.

[mintel.com](#), 19 January 2021 (Koyenikan)

Trends for 2021 – fitness and food delivery

eMarketer has been looking at key digital trends for 2021. In this article it focuses on digital fitness, telemedicine and food delivery apps, which will offer opportunities for marketers to reach consumers in new ways. Rather surprisingly, all three are being taken up by the Boomer generation. While Boomers pioneered home computing and the use of email, they have been slow to adopt more recent technologies such as smart home tech. This year, partly as a result of the pandemic, we can expect much larger numbers to adopt technologies that will help them “stay fit and fed – and in their own homes”.

[emarketer.com](#), 28 January 2021 (Goldman)

Transport and travel

UK car output down 29.3% in 2020

Latest figures from the SMMT reveal that car manufacturing output fell by 29.3% last year to 920,928 units, its lowest since 1984. Production for

the UK and overseas markets fell by 30.4% and 29.1% respectively, with eight out of ten cars being exported and the EU remaining the UK's biggest export destination. The latest forecasts are for car output to reach one million units this year but this will be dependent on the pandemic, market confidence and EU trade rules. On the bright side, combined production of battery electric and hybrid cars rose to 18.8% share of all cars made in Britain, up from 14.8% a year before.

smt.co.uk, 28 January 2021;

<https://www.smt.co.uk/2021/01/uk-car-production-down-29-3-as-coronavirus-slams-brakes-on-sector/>

Despite losses, Ryanair to expand

Ryanair lost €306m between October and December last year. This compares with 2019 when it made a profit of €88m for the period. The airline says it expects to carry no more than 30m passengers in the full financial year to the end of March, down from 152m the year before. Despite this, it expects growth to return and has announced long-term expansion plans. It also predicts that it will be carrying 200m passengers per year by 2026.

independent.co.uk, 1 February 2021 (Calder)

Written by CIM's Knowledge Services Team

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