

# TOP 10 TRENDS TO SHAPE

# 2016

## GEN-ZEALOUS

The under-20 set is emerging as more pragmatic and independent than their Millennial predecessors. Born and bred in a Google-able world, no question or interest is too small to consider, and paving your own path is the norm vs. a bold move. How will brands capitalize on this \$44 billion in spending power? By prioritizing utility over frivolity when it comes to content and spreading efforts across broader audiences to meet fragmented interests.

## SOLO-PRENEURS GET AIR COVER

Freelance and work-from-home has gained momentum (post-recession). Sites like 99designs and Laurel & Wolf, have been joined by a new wave of services to help manage the independent work life. From taxes (Zen99), to background checks (Checkr), to scalable manufacturing (Etsy), turning passion into profession will become an increasingly attractive and viable alternative.

## BELIEFS GET REAL

Rather than just supporting causes and creating awareness, more brands are injecting their beliefs into operations and conversations. REI closed on Black Friday and invited shoppers to "#optoutside." Dove's new 'Speak For Beauty' campaign provoked other brands to support and adopt their hashtag. Brands practicing what they preach will see big ROB (Return on Beliefs).

## NOW ISN'T SOON ENOUGH

Retailers are radically reducing the time between purchase and possession. Amazon and Walmart are testing short range drones. Uber and Instacart create new convenience in urban markets. And Amazon Prime Now promises to deliver thousands of products in two hours. Immediacy will be key for meeting Gen Y and Z expectations.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS, SUPERSIZED

We know BirchBox, StitchFix, Dollar Shave Club ... but P&G, Sephora, and Gillette? The biggest companies are getting in the subscription game. Consumers love the access to try on their terms. Brands love the predictable sales. Investors love it for the scalability. Amazon is a given. Who's next?

## STREAMING KILLS CABLE

A new abundance of streaming services means we'll see a rise in cord-cutters as well as cord-nevers (those who've never had a traditional TV subscription and don't intend to). The MTV VMAs had more viewers on Snapchat than TV. We have Netflix and Amazon originals, YouTube Kids and Nickelodeon's Noggin. Even sports is streaming now. "Cord-nevers" will account for more and more eyeball-time.

## STORE EXPERIENCE AS CONTENT

Just as advertising has shifted from hard sell to relevant content, retail has shifted into a relevant brand experience. Sephora offers product discovery through technology, make-up tutorials, and personalization in stores. Even Amazon has opened a physical store, seeing the value of providing an immersive consumer experience. Any transaction can happen with a click, but brand love will be built "IRL."

## TV ADS GET AI

Using programmatic TV yet? Data such as credit card information will sync with media behavior data to better identify viewers. Advertisers will use those behaviors to serve dynamic creative, changes to headlines and imagery, to create spots for specific viewers. We suggest advertisers budget for their test-and-learn programs now.

## MOBILE EVERYTHING EXCEPT ADS

Soon, nearly everything in our homes will be connected all the time. Mobile apps let us monitor and control slow cookers, beds, vacuums, light bulbs, and more (see Hive). It's an opportunity for marketing, but it's the toughest place to "advertise." Instead, be 1) useful, 2) entertaining, and/or 3) super authentic.

## CONTENT NANOSECONDS

How does the best content get better? By using mobile data to serve it up when it matters most. Google added "micro-moments" to the marketer's lexicon last year; next year, the question isn't "When should we talk to consumers?" It's "What should we say the moment they're ready to talk to us?"

## BRANDS NEED TO BE WELCOMED INTO CONSUMERS' LIVES AND FEEDS.

In 2015, agencies were forced to come to grips with the data revolution. The impact of data on what we say, to whom and when was immense. The necessity of using data to be more targeted, contextual, personal and useful in the moment will redefine how brands connect with consumers in 2016. People have more ways to avoid messages from advertisers than ever. We are all blackbelts in Ad Judo.

By understanding these 10 important trends, brands can solve for the new world of advertising and be Welcome Intruders.

