TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2018

10 TRENDS THAT ARE ABOUT TO CHANGE CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR.
WELCOME TO 2018.
Consumer demands are rising, time to market is shrinking and new technologies are arriving at an ever faster pace. From its creation in 1992 Trendbüro has helped brands navigate through times of change and stay ahead of trends in lifestyle, marketing and beyond.

Once again, we have compiled a list of ten trend developments that will affect consumer behaviour. Each pairing in this ultra-violet* report is a trend and its counter-trend, or the evolution of hyper-relevant phenomena.

* Picked by PANTONE as the colour of the year 2018, ultra violet stands for creative inspiration in a time that requires inventiveness and imagination.
When we announced in January of 2017 that “thrilling changes are ahead”, it was quite a mouthful.

What happened over the course of the year was even more than we had expected: Voice assistants are established in many homes, tolerance is an even bigger challenge for our society than we predicted, and Space X has scheduled its first manned space mission for this August.

Read on to find out what happened to all our predictions for 2017...

01 FROM WEARABLE TO HEARABLE
In 2017 sales for digital voice assistants skyrocketed. Alexa, Google Assistant and others are being made available in a growing number of products and environments and have become mainstream.

02 FROM AI TO ARTIFICIAL EMOTION
In 2017 a humanoid robot joined a UN meeting on artificial intelligence and Gartner just predicted that personal devices will soon know more about a person’s emotional state than their family: The future of AI will be emotional.

03 FROM SUPERFOOD TO SMART FOOD
Better-for-you claims now appear on almost half of all food products globally. DNA-based nutrition start-ups like Habit, Fitnessgenes, WellnessFX, EverylyWell and Geno Palate are fuelling the ongoing boom of DNA food discovery.

04 FROM TECH DYSTOPIA TO TECH OPTIMISM
The younger the consumers, the more they trust technology companies and their security measures - no matter if banking services, personal details or blockchain technology. Brands are well advised to embrace new technologies.
Many companies, among them Audi, Procter & Gamble and Vicks embraced political messages in 2017, while PepsiCo’s “Live for the Moment” mock protest commercial showed that not taking a stance can hurt your business.

Has blockchain changed the world as we know it in 2017? No, but almost daily new collaborations, projects and innovations pop up that set out to decentralize the internet and add transparency to transactions of all kind.

In 2017, Apple and Google respectively released their AR Kit and AR Core, creating the foundation of what IDC’s latest predictions call a 215 billion USD global market by 2021. With the platforms in everyone’s pockets, the trend is here to stay.

In December, CNN titled “Zero waste isn’t just for hippies anymore”: 350,000 Instagram posts were tagged “zero waste”, major US cities have set goals to become trash free, and companies like IKEA and Nestlé followed suit.

Accepting and respecting human life in its diverse ways has proved to be a major cause of friction between generations, genders, and political worldviews. Tolerance has become a key to connecting to Gen Y and Z.

In 2017, travellers continued to seek authentic and exotic experiences. Travel companies are updating their portfolios to cater to the growing demand by consumers that prefer a friend’s couch over hotel beds – regardless of their travel budget.
TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2018
FROM GENDER MARKETING

- Marketing focus on male and female gender
- Lacking concern for diversity among Gen X and baby boomers

TO SELF-DETERMINED IDENTITIES

- Legal, cultural and generational shift towards diversity
- Growing demand for non-permanent identities
- Unisex as the new standard
Fulfilling the human skincare need. We are all made of the same stuff and this new skincare brand understands exactly that. Its first product, to be released this year, is dubbed “The Everything Serum”. It is targeted at all gender identities – or the 71 genders currently defined by Facebook. It is only natural that NGS’s serum addresses ‘everything’ – any conceivable skin type and need.
German Supreme Court recognizes gender diversity. In a precedent-setting ruling, the German government will have to include a non-binary gender option in all official forms and documents. Up until now, all Germans had to be registered as either female, male (or left form fields blank). This court decision reflects the positivity of an active choice and shows how open-mindedness has reached government regulations.
FROM SELF-OPTIMISATION

- Physical and mental optimization
- Continuous pursuit of the “higher, further, faster”
- Eroding work-life-balance

TO SELF-COACHING

- Shifted focus from health to well-being
- Ambient health solutions
- Resurgent work-life-balance
Work and wellness consummated. Bringing wellness classes into workspaces, WeWork continues its steady march to “Create a Life, Not just a Living”. Members have access to wellness amenities in pop-up style studios from common areas to rooftop decks. The healthy mind now works for a healthy body. Originated within this concept, WeWork recently opened Rise by We – a Wellness Studio in the heart of New York City.
Benchmarks fade into the background. With individual needs in mind, Shapa developed a smart scale without a display – there are no numbers in sight. This quiet piece of tech adjusts to users’ individual lifestyles while measuring bone density, muscle mass and overall weight. It refrains from disclosing unpleasant information on its dedicated app. Instead, it motivates users by celebrating streaks of keeping or losing weight.
FROM OFFLINE APPEARANCE

- Limitless strive for self-actualisation by Millennials
- Constant search for new things to do
- Full immersion in the experience culture

TO ONLINE APPEARANCE

- Active participation in community via social media
- Observable datafication of social lives
- Digital interactions as preferred social experiences
Social entertainment from your personal screen. Google’s start-up incubator Area 120 created a platform where videophiles can enjoy their favourite cat video alongside their friends. Syncing friends’ YouTube streams, the platform enables shared video consumption complete with live comments, chats, and shared outbursts of laughter. Staying at home has never been more social.
Face-to-face meeting through digital doubles. Facebook brought its core idea of a platform where friends stay in touch to the next level. Leveraging their own Oculus Rift VR system, they have created a virtual space for Facebook friends to interact with each other as if in the same physical location. More so, the capabilities of VR allow participants to visually enjoy far-away places or virtual environments together.
FROM SHARING

- Passive likes and comments as dominant social media currencies
- Fixed online identities
- Popular interfaces: Facebook, Instagram

TO CONNECTING

- Measurable engagement as most desirable media usage
- Perfect synchronism as the new normal
- Fluid online identities
Real-time connections bring the party to an app. It feels like the Gen Z spirit is distilled into the *Houseparty* app. With real-time digital connecting in mind, it brings friends together in a shared video chat space. It provides a social space that is communal. Its 20m users reportedly spend an hour a day on the app.
Livestreaming Trivia App. Alongside the success of on-demand services like Netflix, the return to ephemeral ways of consuming content has increased in tandem. This is where HQ Trivia comes in – a trivia app that demands you to tune in at specific time intervals. From within its app, it connects a competitive global audience that challenges each other from the comfort of their own homes.
FROM VOCALOGUE

- Digital speech recognition as the major interface
- Integrative platforms: Alexa, Google Assistant, Siri

TO VISUALOGUE

- New hardware as enabler of the seeing Internet
- Facial and emotion recognition
- Video content on the rise
Facial recognition as the next authentication and social tool. The release of the iPhone X featured the facial recognition technology aptly named “FaceID”. Sophisticated facial mapping allows users to wear mascots using Animoji characters – emojis come to live. Most prominently the technology acts as biometrical lock and lets users make purchases with just a single look.
Visual data is used to make real-time adaptive advertising. The iconic Piccadilly Circus has always been a landmark for media advertising. Equipped with cameras and by using algorithms, the billboard comes alive by recognising the colour of passing cars, the gender of passers-by and other real-time information such as weather in order to provide targeted and context-specific visual ads.
FROM DOORSTEP DELIVERY TO LATCHKEY REVOLUTION

- Established services: Prime Now, food delivery, concierge services
- Convenient service economy to the doorstep, but no further
- First priority on speed

- Living space as last physical barrier
- Added priority on convenience
- Vast array of platform-based services
Next level delivery convenience. Gone are days when parcel deliveries arrive to one’s unoccupied home leaving consumers with the dreaded delivery note. With the integration of an app, smart locks and cameras, *August Access* allows users to remotely unlock their door for the delivery courier to conveniently enter and safely deliver packaged goods without requiring anyone’s presence at home.
Using consumer trust to open doors. With service delivery and extreme convenience in mind, Amazon’s latest delivery offering will be providing services such as cleaning and dog walking services to out-of-home customers, offering a safe and flexible delivery of home services with remote and timely access points. Want an apartment all cleaned and tidy before coming back from vacation? Done.
Disruptive innovations as challenger of traditional industries
Ever shorter time to market and product cycles

Learned software update mentality transferred to other products and services
Smart IoT as door-opener for update models
Rapid prototyping within service industries and platforms

FROM LIFE CYCLE TO UPDATE CYCLE
A beta version on fire. Battlegrounds is an extension on previous mods developed by Irish designer B. Greene for other games based on the 2000 film Battle Royale. In spring 2017 the game became available in "early access" – an unfinished but playable version. It sold over 20m copies and became the most-watched game on Twitch, the world's largest game-streaming platform. A remixed co-created beta-version took pop culture by storm.
User-generated hospitality innovation. In Charlotte, North Carolina, Marriott, the world’s largest hotel company, operates the “M Beta”. It is a working innovation lab where Marriott tests and measures everything about the hotel experience with customers, in real-time. Guests give their feedback to new concepts, by tapping “beta buttons” placed throughout the hotel.
FROM BLOCKCHAIN PROTOTYPES TO ENGINEERED TRUST

- Successful B2B blockchain projects
- Little consumer-facing solutions
- Huge potential for automated transactions of all kinds

- Lacking online security, authenticity and trust
- Apparent need for transparent and trust-building technologies
- Credible brands as fuller of consumers’ void
A consumer-facing blockchain initiative. Imagine a world where the precise origin, locale, regulation, pesticides and journey of one’s favourite imported fruit can be traced with absolute certainty. The IBM Blockchain initiative with Walmart and Chinese retailer JD.com improves food traceability and tracking and enhances consumer confidence due to greater transparency.
A tinder for skills with a safety twist. Using blockchain technology, open-source project Peerism is developing an app that removes all needs for a CV or a LinkedIn profile with skills-based tokens. As trust becomes embedded into the technology, individual talents and skills will be available on demand with a standardised system where all that will be necessary to complete a job will be a swipe or a tap a la Tinder.
FROM BRAND SPACES

- Resurgent interest in retail as brand experience platforms
- Various flagship and pop-up store concepts

TO BRAND PURPOSE

- True helpfulness as success factor for brands
- Exceptional service over physical products
- Physical brand spaces with multi-faceted roles
A one-of-its-kind luxury brand experience. The Gucci Garden experience is “an ocean rather than a pool” says Gucci’s creative director Alessandro Michele. The new Gucci retail experience is designed to be a limitless playground for their customers. Situated in Florence, it houses a boutique, restaurant and exhibition spaces. A marriage of art, commerce and hospitality that connects to new and current consumers in unprecedented ways.
A holistic lifestyle solution. With the reveal of their electric car concept, Chinese brand Byton has ambitions of “turning the car into the next-generation smart device.” The car features a dashboard-spanning screen and boasts Byton Life - a holistic lifestyle solution that integrates an Alexa assistant, health devices and a digital cloud platform all in service to understanding and fulfilling your personal needs.
FROM METROPOLES

- Big cities offer creative environment
- Cultural and economic hubs
- Growing concerns over gentrification and cost of living

TO SECONDARY CITIES

- Second-tier cities as new home to creative classes
- Cultural platforms and start-up hubs suddenly outside traditional metropolises
Networking for designers. Each October, the DDW draws attention away from Amsterdam by presenting work and ideas of more than 2,500 designers to 300,000 international visitors. In more than a hundred locations across the city, the biggest design event in Northern Europe organises and facilitates exhibitions, lectures, prize ceremonies, networking events, debates and festivities.
Collaboration meets creativity. Through an award-winning conversion of an old factory into a co-working space, Leeds-based Duke Studios provides inspiring workspace and services to the creative industry. Duke Studios are part of the development of the Yorkshire city into a hub of collaboration and creativity.