KEY TRENDS FOR CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

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1. THE AGE OF SYSTEMS

In an increasingly complex world, we will require a powerful combination of design thinking and systems thinking to address economic, political and societal challenges. Bringing these two areas together will see issues reframed as opportunities, where design and creativity can be used to develop long-term solutions for people, the environment, and business.

Designing better systems will become even more crucial than the design of the products themselves. We will move from product-focused design towards systemic design – for example, replacing linear supply chains with circular resource models. It is now time for brands to rethink internal systems to maximise long-term opportunities.

As a counter movement to the short-term gains that are currently being prioritised, long-term thinking has started to emerge in artistic and cultural fields, and this will ultimately influence business. Businesses are now experimenting with ways to make this type of thinking more commercial by emphasising innovation and making sure that the craft and time that goes into creating products is effectively communicated.

2. THE END OF MORE

In the future, people will want access over ownership; instead of having more things, they will simply want their desires fulfilled. This shift will take the form of an immaterial economy based on emotions, experience and knowledge. People will be looking for quality over quantity in their consumption, and they will be finding different ways to achieve this, such as through the rental economy and the purchase of resourceful essentials.

For new products, young designers and forward-thinking companies will be looking for ways to use bio-design and waste streams in innovative and compelling ways. As businesses adapt to appeal to more conscious consumers, they also will find that the opportunities will generate cost savings – estimated at $60bn by 2030 in Europe alone.

3. THE HOME HUB

Our concept of home is changing, and so is what we do in both personal and public spaces. Home is becoming a key space for innovation in the areas of comfort and community, as consumers bring more activities into their immediate surroundings. It is becoming a space for self-improvement and self-care, and it will continue to be a growing market in 2021, driven by the need for peace and solace.

Overwhelmed and seeking calm, consumers will be bringing more than just food delivery into their personal spaces in 2021, with the rise of at-home activities such as live virtual workout classes. Millennials are fuelling this shift (one study found that in the US, Millennials spent 70% more time at home than the general population), but it is about more than just retreating; it is also about optimising the home as a system, in order to make time for meaningful experiences outside the home.

Staying home is becoming easier and more aspirational, and – more importantly – feeling "at home" with a brand, whether in store and online, is becoming an increasingly important consideration.

4. THE AGE GAP

Income polarisation between the old and the young is playing out against a wider macro trend. In many parts of the world, the population is living longer at a time of falling birth rates. This scenario is starting to cause intergenerational friction as younger people are faced with picking up the increased tax bill for the cost of long-term elderly care. Governments will be looking to keep older people healthy for as long as possible to avoid excessive tax burdens. For businesses and brands, there is an opportunity to become champions and facilitators of increasing the longevity dividend for ageing individuals.

In other parts of the world, especially in Asia and Africa's emerging economies, the population is growing younger and brands need to know how to address the exciting opportunities that these generations represent.

In this era of demographic polarisation, brands will need to speak to both sides, and tech, social media and retail spaces can provide the necessary solutions.

5. INCLUSIVE NETWORKS

Design for all will ramp up in 2021, with governments, institutes and brands all adopting universal design strategies. As consumer demand for inclusive design grows, diversity will be recognised and celebrated across a fuller spectrum:
• **'Pluriversal' thinking and design:** this direction decolonises design and brings diverse viewpoints into the thinking and design process by including practitioners from a variety of backgrounds. We will also see a focus on co-creating solutions that leave space for underrepresented groups to participate in the design process.
• **Respectful design:** respectful design removes humans from the centre of the universe to embrace a more holistic vision that concentrates on the connections between all living forms, such as plants and animals.
• **Local luxury:** international brands and cross-border e-commerce purchases have dominated retail in recent years, but youth around the world will be looking for brands that celebrate local heritage in the coming years, driven by the improved quality of domestic goods and the emergence of new nationalism.

6. DIGITAL CRAFTSMANSHIP

Today's shoppers increasingly interact across both physical and digital realms, and forward-thinking fashion brands and retailers are adopting XR technology to address this shift. Going forward, product-less stores will provide a more immersive and engaging shopping journey, and digital-only clothing and interiors will be used for social media, working and gaming, and unlock limitless creativity among the next generation of designers.

Purpose-driven Gen Z and Millennial consumers will also embrace the idea of digital design as an opportunity to satisfy a desire for newness while also mitigating the environmental drain caused by physical production.

Businesses will need to think about how they can optimise the digital experience of their brand, their product, and their customer experience.