



2019-2020

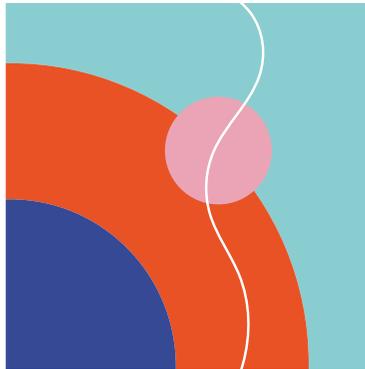
# Marketing Trend Report

15 key trends driving change in  
design, digital, advertising,  
social & brand segments.



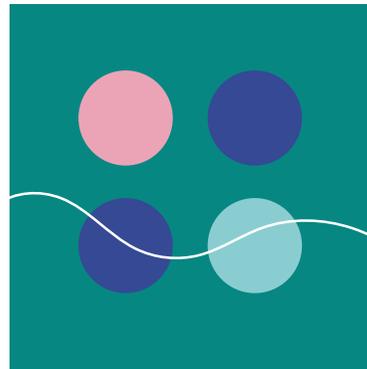
# The future is now

Marketing moves fast. If you want to stay ahead of the game, it's time to look beyond the now and cast your gaze to the future. In this report we've covered 15 key trends set to shape the future of marketing over the next 12 months.



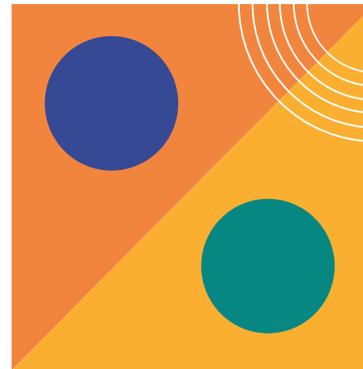
## Design

Expect to see more inclusive design solutions, immersive mobile experiences, more story-telling imagery and more diversity in how we experience content.



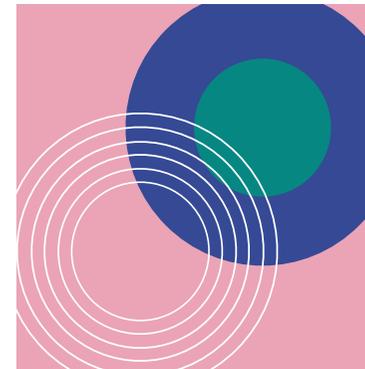
## Digital

Companies are now expected to provide faster, better and frictionless digital customer experiences. We'll also see a lot more AI fuelled business offerings.



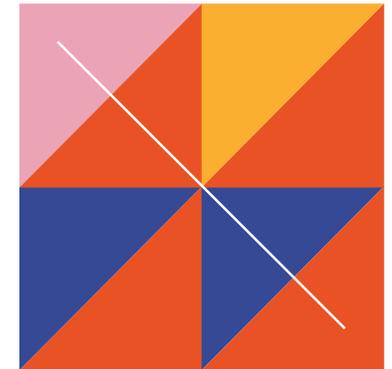
## Advertising

Audiences are expecting personalised, valuable experiences and are actively seeking out brands they can have long-lasting relationships with.



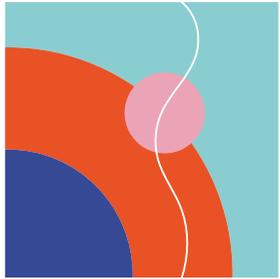
## Social

Expect to see decreased reach and engagement, along with plenty of instability on platforms like Facebook and Instagram.



## Brand

Consumers are connecting with brands that champion genuine conversation, community driven design, brand transparency and engaging narratives.



# Design

Designers are openly sharing knowledge, expertise and processes with one another in order to give communities better, more relevant content experiences.

Expect to see more inclusive design solutions, immersive mobile experiences, more story-telling imagery and more diversity in how we experience content.



## Inclusive design takes center stage

As a society, we are still learning that everybody is different and unique, and that we all have unique needs. Inclusive design is just design done well, created to cater for as many people as possible. Sound's simple right? Well, the problem is, design can often be built on assumptions, and quite often those assumptions can be well off the mark.

The fact is, no one interacts with your brand in a vacuum void of distraction. Whether you consider yourself typically 'abled' or not, we're all compromised in some way, all of the time.

Exclusion can occur on a situational, environmental, mental, physical or even emotional basis. Designing with these factors in mind will help you communicate your message in a better way and to a wider audience.

Creating an inclusive experience takes time and dedication but it really is good for business. Not only will it grow the reach of your potential audience, you'll also step ahead of the pack when it comes to social responsibility and innovation.

### Tips to make your designs more inclusive

- + Recognise your personal bias by involving your user community in the research and testing phase. If you don't have a user community yet, try to create diverse customer personas by thinking about situational, environmental, mental and physical factors that effect your users.
- + Offer different ways to engage or participate in an experience. Different options allow users to choose which way they would prefer to engage. Examples are adding subtitles to video or creating infographics to help users understand your content.





## Story-telling imagery

We all know a stock photo when we see one, and so do our audiences. In an oversaturated marketing of stock 'everything', these types of images just aren't doing the trick anymore.

What's driving success globally is authentic, emotive creative that doesn't aim to sell, but rather aims to tell a story - your story. We're seeing customer relationships and brand communities strengthen from content that is less staged, less refined and more transparent in nature.

### Tips for creating original imagery

- + Invest in brand photography that puts your product or service in context with how your users will experience it to build an emotional connection.
- + Think about how your photographs will be used before you shoot – will you need wide, landscape images for your website banners? What images will work well on your socials? Think and plan ahead for maximum efficiency and consistency.
- + Sharing behind-the-scenes, less refined content is a way to be transparent and real. This type of imagery is best shared through Stories on social media.



## Mobile-first websites

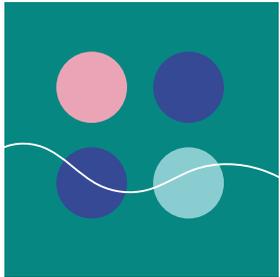
Browsing the web on a mobile device has long since surpassed desktop browsing as the most popular way to surf the net.

What's becoming more prevalent though, is the concept of the mobile ONLY experience. Standard design practice is to create responsive web designs that look good and work well on all devices - but many designers will design the desktop interface first, then tweak that design to suit other devices later.

It's time for designers to focus on designing mobile-first experiences, with desktop as a secondary experience.

### Tips for designing mobile-first websites

- + Prioritise speed. Do everything you can to optimise your site speed results - use Google's [\*\*page speed tool\*\*](#) to find out where to start.
- + Design for thumbs and fingers. Our fingers are significantly bigger than a mouse cursor, so make sure you make your buttons and menu items are easy to see and tap.
- + Pre-empt your users' needs. For example, if you have a form that asks for a phone number, make the numeric keypad pop up instead of the alphabetic keyboard, or use location technology to offer your users a personalised experience that is relevant to their location.



# Digital

Companies are now expected to provide frictionless digital customer experiences. With this expectation, we'll start to see a lot more AI fuelled businesses driving new offerings and business models with a key focus on automated practices. Data will be at the centre of delivering high-quality content with standout personalised customer journeys that grab and maintain the attention of consumers.





## Video is still king of content

Video marketing isn't a new tactic, but its success has gone off the charts with the latest stats showing 72% of consumers prefer to watch video than read text when given the option.

Not only can video be a great way to share your story, it's even better at helping customers along the purchasing funnel. Say a potential customer is looking at two products – yours and a competitor's. A positive video review from an external source (like a past customer, influencer or reputable reviewing company) can help convince a customer that your product is the better choice.

### Tips for boosting your video ROI

- + Have you tried live streaming? The spontaneity and interactivity of this type of video is hugely popular with audiences.
- + Share your videos on social – they generate around 1200% more shares than text and images combined.
- + Get to the point – fast. 1 in 5 viewers will click away from your video in the first 10 seconds, so make those seconds count. Spark curiosity with a hook or question that grabs their attention right away.
- + Want to get your video found on search? Descriptions are everything. Make sure you've included relevant keywords and fully fleshed out your video description. You can also create video sitemaps to help Google crawl your video.
- + 81% of users mute video ads, so add subtitles to your videos for maximum effect.





## Local Search

46% of all searches on Google are seeking local information, but only 44% of local stores have claimed their 'Google My Business' Listing. That's a lot of missed business!

Optimising your local search results is a combined effort of keyword research (with an emphasis on voice search), content consistency, content value, and the quality of your link acquisitions.

### Tips for optimising your local search results

- + Keyword research: for local business, voice search is pretty important - it's a lot easier to say 'find a doctor near me' than it is to type it. Make sure to look into keyword variations that have a conversational tone.
- + Content: Create content with a local focus and make sure it brings value to the reader or viewer.
- + Quality Links: Aim for quality links like local directory websites, industry-related local websites, local chamber of commerce sites and local news sites. And don't forget it's important your links comply with **Google's Webmaster Guidelines**, otherwise you'll be at risk of being penalised.



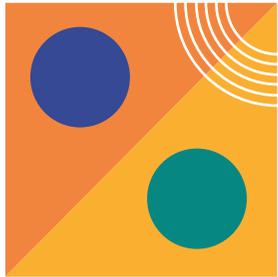
## Visual Search

Did you know there are over 600 million visual searches on Pinterest every month? With more advanced optical technology being built into popular search platforms, visual search is set to top the charts in the coming year.

Google is refining its Lens app and looking at integrating this functionality into search. Users will be able to snap a photo on their smartphone, upload to Google and receive results relevant to that image category (i.e. shop similar products, location reviews or opening hours, historical facts, identification of plants or animals and more).

### Tips for visual search

- + Optimise your meta descriptions and alt text so search engines can crawl your images accurately.
- + Make use of **Google's badge feature**. Make sure your meta data on products is extremely detailed to improve chances of showing up in related items.
- + Get on board with Instagram's shoppable post features, where users can complete their purchase journey without ever leaving the Instagram app.



# Advertising

It's time to stop talking AT consumers and start talking WITH them. Don't chase the sale, aim to spark conversation.

Audiences are expecting personalised, valuable experiences and are actively seeking out brands they want to make long-lasting relationships with.



## Super targeted audio advertising

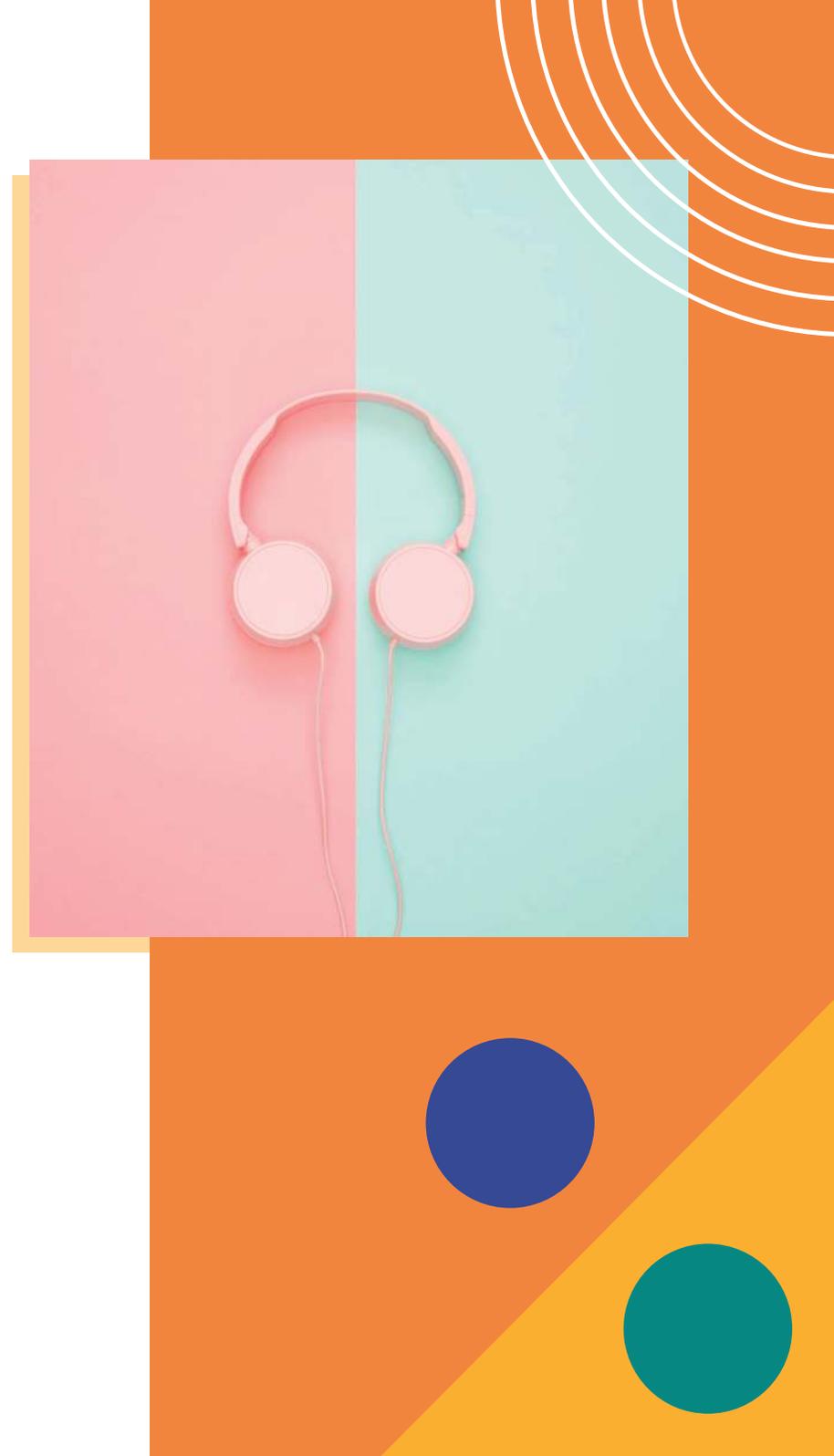
Streaming services are all about one thing - good content. Where there is good content, there is good opportunity. Through avenues like podcasts and music streaming services, we can now target niche audiences like never before.

Podcasts are made to cater for niche interests and have the ability to amass loyal, passionate audiences. Podcasts already humanize content through the way they are created – an individual talking to their audience. As marketers, we can leverage the relationship between the creator and their audience to build positive brand connections.

Music streaming services are also a great platform for targeted advertising. With the ability to stream anywhere and everywhere, most of us are connected to music streaming services at multiple points each day. Being an emotional experience, music is a powerful way to build brand perception or make a specific impression on your audience.

### Tips for audio advertising

- + Make your ad contextual. Pick a podcast, playlist or genre whose audience's interests, passions or viewpoints align with, or can benefit from, your brand.
- + People like listening to friendly people, which is why peer-to-peer, conversational style voice overs are dominating the advertising space.
- + Take it slow – conversations are much slower in nature than ads, so make sure you give your audience time to absorb your message.
- + Where does your audience spend most of their time digitally? Combine your audio ads with other digital advertising for an omni-channel experience.





## It's time to get personal

Australian consumers are acting in favour of personalised advertising. This goes for all digital channels, and more humanised touch points like phone conversations and in-store experiences.

### Case study: Spotify's hyper-local personalisation

Using its colossal trove of user data, Spotify's team created personalised advertising for different cities across Australia. Based on data interpretation, Spotify created unique statements to engage with communities in a hyper-local way, making their content relevant to very specific groups of people.

Spotify's streaming service is a purely digital product. By advertising in physical communal spaces like train and bus stations, Spotify positioned their brand as part of our community, and made emotive connections in each city with personalised content that only locals can relate to.



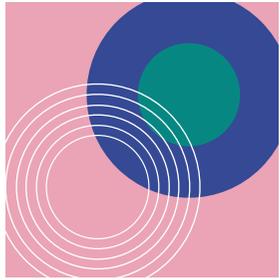
## Brand over product

Without a strong brand, businesses rely purely on the situational value of their products, rather than an emotive connection between consumer and brand.

The exponential growth of online business has led to a shift in priorities for brands that want to stand out. Brand-first advertising is yielding great results in repeat purchasing habits, community growth and emotive connections.

### Tips for brand advertising

- + People buy from brands they can trust. Being transparent about your business processes, return policies and how you interact with complaints and compliments on public platforms are key factors in consumers trusting brands. They also love to know you're real people that so having a team section on your about page is a great way to humanise your brand.
- + Don't talk at your customers, converse with them. To build customer relationships, you need to show you value their opinions. Oh, and lay off the sale talk... consumers can generally tell when you're trying to push a sale.
- + People buy from brands that align with their values. Find out what drives your market and make sure your shared values shine through your marketing and advertising messages.



# Social

The state of social is slippery ground - expect to see decreased reach and engagement, along with plenty of instability on platforms like Facebook and Instagram. Social is moving away from broadcasts in the feed to more personal communications like live video, private groups, temporary stories and interactive chatbots.



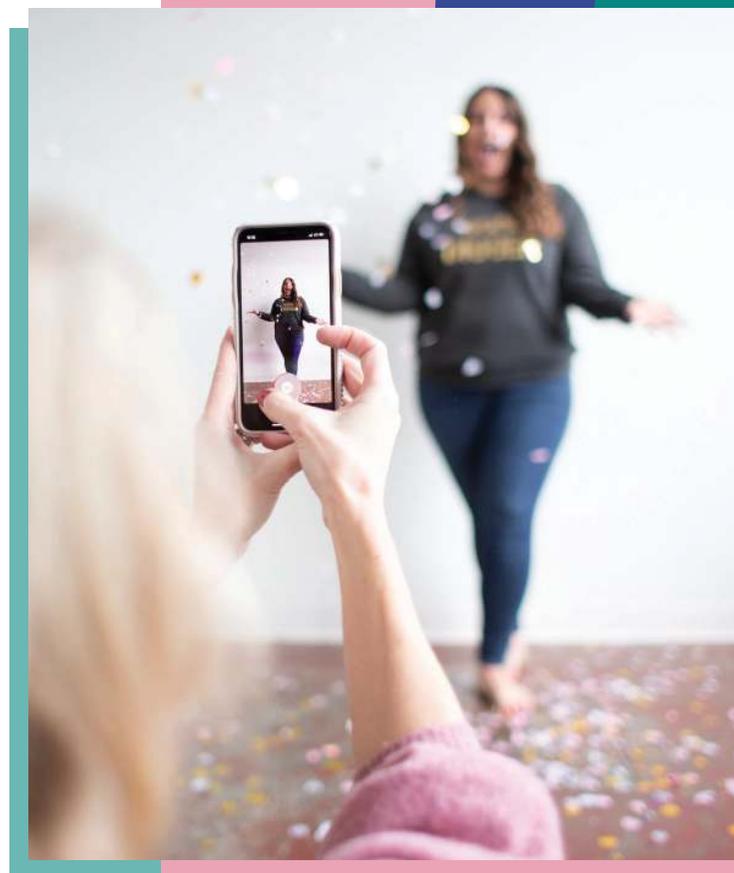
## Stories take centre stage

Stories, whether on Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat or WhatsApp, are set to surpass feeds as the primary way people share things with their friends. Way back in the day, social was originally designed as a text-based desktop experience. It has since progressed to mobile-first hubs of in-the-moment experiences, thoughts, moods and creations.

Ephemeral content sharing – here one day, gone the next – creates a space that feels experimentive, immediate and real, and users are loving it. Data is showing that in this context, less polished, more intimate and more realistic content is performing better than heavily edited takes with salesy copy.

### Tips for creating compelling Stories

- + It's time to start putting Stories first – with 4 out of 5 major brands already focusing their attention to story content, it's time to shift your focus before you get left behind.
- + With mobile-first in mind, it's time to do a 90 degree shift in how we film video and remember to shoot in portrait mode.
- + Structure your story content into different categories and utilise the Highlights feature. Some highlight structural ideas are: company culture, Q&A's, product reviews, brand values, meet the team... the options are endless!
- + If you're not sure what to start posting - ask your audience! They'll tell you what they want to see more of, and what they aren't into.





## Community will save you

Facebook will soon be focusing its efforts on building public and private communities online. As a result, groups and communities will be prioritised in the feed, with content from pages being pushed further down.

Now more than ever, it's important to keep your community engaged.

### Tips for engaging your social community

- + If you don't have a group on Facebook, it's time to set one up. Groups can be public, private (need permission to join) and even secret (aka invisible)!
- + Start creating live video content. Live streaming lets your customers in on your 'secrets' and is a great way to build trust. It's also a great way to share exciting announcements, host Q&A sessions and be more transparent about how you run your business.
- + Take time to produce great video content - video sharing on Facebook increases your engagement by up to 1200%.



## Cost of social ads skyrockets

With 1 in 4 Facebook pages already using paid media, rising costs are putting a cap on how successful paid social advertising can really be. Social teams are now using a collaborative approach between paid and organic social, with more time and resources being dedicated to generating high-quality content rather than just ad strategy and spend.

### Tips for combining paid & social efforts

- + Test your planned paid ad campaigns as organic content first. Once you can see what's working, build on that creative to build your paid strategy.
- + Learn from past campaigns. With the right analytical tools in place tracking results, revenue and lead generation is easy. Incorporate past insights into your new strategies to make the most out of your budget.
- + Don't broadcast a statement, aka talk 'at' your audience. Aim to talk 'with' them, with the end goal being to generate user discussion and engagement.
- + Need help with content ideas? Ask your audience what content they like best.



# Brand

We're riding the wave of personalised experience. As the boundaries between physical and digital experience blurs, consumers are looking towards brands that disrupt the traditional monologue in traditional settings, and instead champion genuine conversation, community driven design, brand transparency and engaging narratives.



# Transparency creates loyal customers

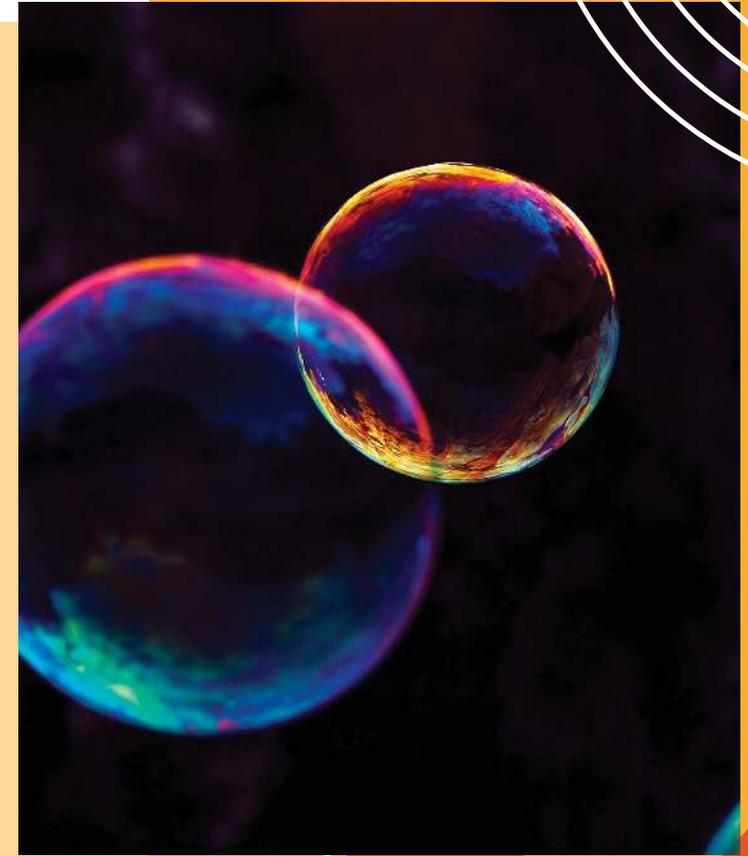
Transparency builds trust, and trust makes relationships possible. Without strong relationships, brand loyalty can't grow, and your product or service relies purely on situational value, rather than emotional connection.

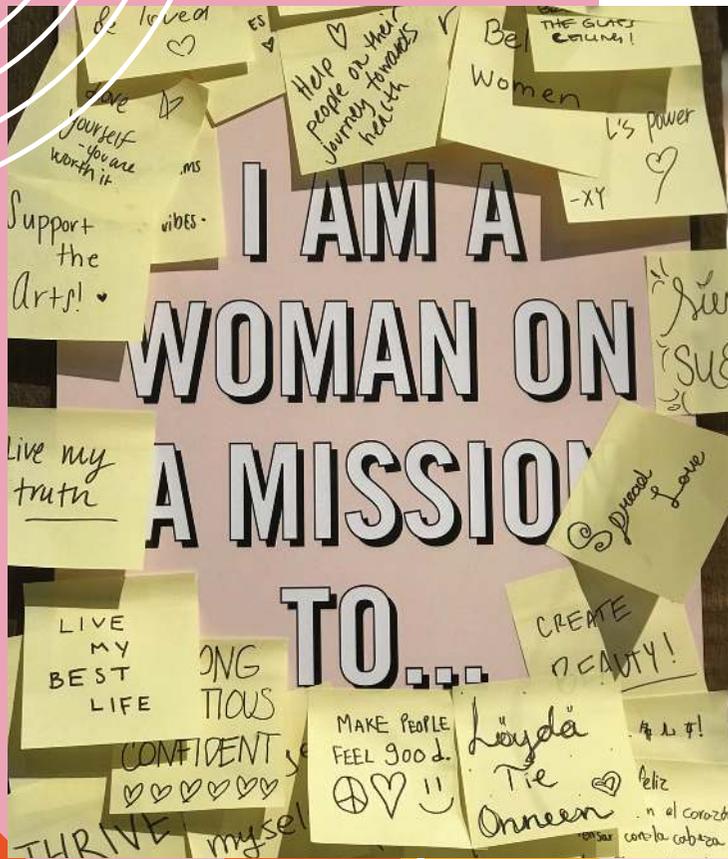
Consumer's access to information has changed dramatically since the 90's. In today's digital world, it's no longer possible to leave a gap between what a brand says and what the brand does. Consumers now have the power to not take brands at face value and to research what they are buying into before making a purchase.

Winning the hearts and minds of your consumers will rely on your willingness to be transparent. Some great examples of transparency success are [Buffer](#), [Chobani](#), [Everlane](#) and [Patagonia](#).

## Tips for becoming more transparent

- + Ask your customers how transparent they think you are. Learn where you might benefit from being more forthcoming.
- + Overshare information and make everything accessible. Be transparent about being transparent.
- + Be honest - no one is perfect so don't pretend to be! Perfection doesn't inspire trust, it just evokes suspicion, so admit to things you're still working on.
- + Ask permission from your customers before you use their data. People don't like the fact that businesses target them using data they didn't give freely. They do, however, love to give their opinions when asked. Explicitly asking your customers for feedback will show you value them and helps to build brand loyalty.





## Brands need to be mission-driven

Over half of Gen Z's and Millennials are more likely to align with brands that promote progressive values and play a meaningful role in society. In short, if your brand doesn't stand for something, and act on it, then you're missing the mark for the majority of the under 30's market.

Young consumers are more aware of their world in a global sense than any generation before, they are future-thinking individuals that put emphasis on environmental, mental and societal impact that brands and organisations with power (like the government) have.

Looking forward, businesses who are less inclusive and less caring about issues that are important to their audience will see a decline in brand reputation and loyalty.

### Case study: Thank You's pathway to success

Thank You is a brand that puts purpose before profit, with a business model that sends 100% profits to those in need. After 5 years of rejections from Australia's two biggest supermarkets, everything changed when thousands of their loyal customers petitioned their case. The two major supermarkets conceded, and since then, Thank You has developed an additional 54 products off the back of their success. What's more, their hand wash is now the number one seller at those major supermarkets. Without their purpose (the act of donating all profits to those in need) Thank You would never have gained their loyal following which helped them reach international success.

- + Don't make your business mission immediate, think bolder and bigger – for big, bold ideas lead to innovation.
- + Don't just say it, prove it. All for social equality? Prove it by including diverse groups in your brand imagery and content. All for a greener world? Prove it by being transparent about your processes.



# The future of customer experience is phygital

To satisfy the growing population of hyper-connected consumers, brands will need to combine their physical and digital experiences to create united 'phygital' customer experiences.

Phygital experiences bring together the best of the physical and digital worlds; the immediacy, immersion and speed of the online experience and the interaction with people, product and retail spaces of the offline world.

The concept of a phygital experience isn't about replicating what happens in a physical world to the digital one, or vice versa, but more about how they can complement each other to create new, collaborative augmented realities.

## Tips for creating phygital experiences

- + Customers interact with brands online and offline indiscriminately, so make sure they are having equal experiences in both realities. Does the brand look and feel the same? Do they feel welcomed? Is your online store as easy to navigate as walking through your brick-and-mortar store? Is there someone to talk to if you need help (think livechat or chatbots for digital)?
- + Customers look for a connected experience; how can you bring the physical world into the digital realm? How can digital play a meaningful part in your brick-and-mortar store?
- + Make your campaigns phygital. Plan out how the physical and digital manifestations of your campaign can compliment each other.



# What's next?

We hope you enjoyed the 2019-20 Marketing Trend Report, and that it has provided you with the insight into what your business needs to do to level up.

**Want to talk to us about what this report means for your business?**

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