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FOREWORD

Last year we published the very first report under this title. Our goal was two-fold. First of all, we wanted to shed some light on social media marketing to the global creative community. Based on the feedback, we feel like we managed to do that.

And the reason we did so leads us to the second point. Our amazing experts from leading independent agencies all over the world. In addition to sharing the forecasts, we also wanted to put the forecasters in the limelight. The indies are usually left out of reports like this due to their size, not their competence. Bringing the best of independent agencies together, this whitepaper acts like a megaphone for the expertise, insights and ideas that are embedded in thenetworkone.

Based on the number of agencies who returned this year, we feel we have done ok with this goal too.

The biggest fear for an annual trends report is that nothing much has changed. Old news, different cover. Fortunately, that is not the case this time. Due to the rapid changes of social media – it only seems to be picking up speed, as more and more people tune in thanks to the pandemic – there are loads of interesting new opportunities for brands in 2022.

Humble thanks to all our experts – old and new – for sharing their thoughts. We know it is the busiest time of the year, so we truly appreciate it. Hopefully you, the reader, will find them as insightful and inspiring as we did compiling the report.

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thenetworkone

The world's leading independent agencies network. With over 1,200 agencies in 115 countries, thenetworkone is uniquely suited to find you the right agency partner in whichever market you need. Our best-in-class agencies can provide advertising, PR, media, digital, events, branding and design, B2B and B2C solutions, plus anything else you might require.

Kurio // The Social Media Age(ncy)

We are a social-first creative agency based in Helsinki, Finland. We deliver results whether it is bigger profits, increased sales, reduced media budgets or globally acknowledged campaigns that move people with insight and creativity. We believe social media has changed the way marketing works – for good. Proud to be part of thenetworkone and named as the Agency Of The Year 2020 in European Excellence Awards, SABRE Awards EMEA and Finnish Comms Awards.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We interviewed 21 leading independent agencies around the world and uncovered the following trends for social media marketing in 2022. All the trends, as well as the individual expert interviews are explored in detail in this report.

Three main trends for social media marketing in 2022:

- **TikTok will be the king.** Its influence on other platforms is clear, as is its path to become the no. 1 social app – it is time you tap into it, no matter your industry.
- **Back to the communities-driven mode.** It might be due to the pandemic, that we all are craving a community – brands need to relearn the tactics of the early days of social and earn their place in the communities.
- **Age of exploration in metaverse.** Whether it is AR, VR, NFT, gaming, avatars or any other of the multi-faceted aspects, metaverse will have something of interest for your brand in 2022. Better get learning.

Three influencer marketing trends for 2022:

- **Influencer economy is booming.** As influencers are becoming household names not only on the channels, but on store shelves as well, brands need to rethink their influencer strategies.
- **It's a creator gold rush.** As the talk has shifted from influencers to creators, the whole scene has diversified – more and more people create content from ever more niche topics.
- **In-house meets influencers.** It is only natural as the next step in tightening the relationships between brands and influencers: their recruitment. We've seen some, expect to see many more.

Three additional trends were identified as well. The elderly are becoming an ever more important user group on social, thanks to the lockdowns. We're moving into a short-video-first world, with the six seconds being a standard. Also, brands will favor ambassadors over influencers, trying to avoid one-hit wonders.

This year we also analyzed the social trends for healthcare. Firstly, pharma will tap into edutainment a la TikTok for casual videos, unlike their typical content. Secondly, the misinformation on social is something that the healthcare industry needs to tackle, building on credibility. Thirdly, influencers will shake this industry as well – not least by cutting out the middlemen.

METHODOLOGY

The insights were gathered by interviewing 25 social media marketing experts from 21 award-winning independent agencies. The respondents are all part of the world's leading independent agency network, thenetworkone, hailing from countries as diverse as China, USA, India, Germany, Chile, UK, South Africa, New Zealand, and Romania. The interviews were done in December 2021.

All the respondents are using social media to help their clients do better communications, marketing, and eventually, business. They don't work with any particular social media platform or service-provider, thus their insights come from an objective point-of-view. Coming from not only different countries, but also different types of agencies, their answers offer a 360 view of social media marketing for the upcoming year.

TOP 3 TRENDS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING 2022

#1 TREND FOR SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

TIKTOK WILL BE THE KING

No matter your industry, it is time to dive into TikTok. What started at the same time as pandemic, has gained momentum during the lockdowns – and will only grow stronger in 2022. Its influence on other platforms is clear, as is its path to become the no. 1 social app.

“This may hurt some feelings, but in 2022 TikTok will overthrow Instagram as the most important platform for social media marketing. While Instagram poured endless resources into making its platform more e-commerce friendly, it ignored the growing demand for short-form video content. Now, TikTok has captured that market and Instagram is doing its best to catch up.

- - Most importantly, TikTok’s knack for virality will push it over the edge in 2022 as the social media platform for marketers to be on.”

**Kevin Fernandez, Social Media Producer,
Adolescent Content**

“1 billion on TikTok. Holy. Cow. This has been a long time coming, but there is still so much untapped potential here, it’s mind-boggling. I am quite confident that 2022 will see a shift from short-form video being a niche part of the communication strategy to becoming one of the chief commodities in the marketing mix.”

Lucas Florian, Unit Director, PIABO

”The average user spends 52 minutes a day on TikTok and 60% of TikTok users are Gen Z. TikTok has opened up fresh perspectives and opportunities for creators, artists and businesses looking to utilize social media to connect with users on the platform. The right story + personality + sound will serve as foundations for brands looking to leverage the platform in 2022.”

**Presh Hunder, Social Media Manager & Jide Agbana, Product Marketing Manager,
Enterfive**

#2 TREND FOR SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

BACK TO THE COMMUNITIES-DRIVEN MODE

Get down from the ivory tower of dark-ads-only and earn your place by becoming a member of the communities you are targeting. Maybe it is the pandemic, but we all are craving for all things community. Can your brand deliver on that?

“With the continued distrust of Facebook in addition to the rise of emerging platforms we will continue to see the fragmentation of the attention economy. With communities congregating in pockets of social platforms to rally around niche interests. - - What this means for marketers is that it’s no longer enough to put all your eggs in one basket and instead, a portfolio approach is necessary. Reinforcing, not only marketing effectiveness by appearing on multiple touchpoints, but helping brands tell authentic stories, positioning them as well rounded personalities with communities they care about vs. a one dimensional entity on ‘transmit’ mode.”

Emily Ostrowska, Social Strategist, Culture

“After the past few years of brand-driven, advertising-driven and commerce-driven social media, the pandemic triggered a nostalgic shift back to what we all first logged on for in the days of blogs and MySpace: active and authentic communities. From the astronomic rise of Discord to the power of local Facebook and WhatsApp groups, these thriving communities offer a valuable opportunity for users to find their tribes, and for brands and marketers to harness vocal aficionados as content creators – making TikTok trainspotters and Fortnite streamers the new ‘influencers’.”

Amy Bottrill, Social Account Director, Launch

“One of the most interesting trends to watch is the growing level of influence that content creators have in the social environment. - - The relationship that these content creators have with their communities is one that no brand could have, no matter how transparent or authentic it may be on social media and that’s why brands should find non-intrusive-ways to tap into these communities to listen and learn more about their customers. Approaching communities through content creators should be mandatory in 2022 social strategies for brands. But it’s important to do it in a way that responds to the needs of these communities and that brings added value to them.”

Oana Oprea, Head of Digital Planning, Jam Session

#3 TREND FOR SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

AGE OF EXPLORATION IN METAVERSE

Whatever it will be called by the end of 2022, it will surely have made an impact. Your job is to find out what that impact can be for you. Whether it lies in AR, VR, NFT, gaming, avatars or any other of the multifaceted aspects, metaverse will have something worth your attention. Go on, set sail for an adventure!

“Gucci did a great job seamlessly embracing their digital presence this year with its Roblox campaign, Gucci Garden, which went live in May. Getting ahead of the frenzy and fixation on the metaverse, the fashion house unlocked a new approach to social campaigning. - - In 2022, there will no doubt be more retailers tossing their hat into the metaverse/gaming ring with many brands already showing to be bullish on this new frontier. As the metaverse continues to develop and expand, the onus will be on brands not to just jump into these platforms for the sake of being first-movers, but

rather to study the user behaviors and leverage strong platform and brand insights to stand out among the quickly crowded virtual space.”

**Adaobi Ugoago, Senior Creative Strategist,
Day One Agency**

“Social media will be the vehicle through which users will come to understand the metaverse and also what they can do in it. With the emergence of Internet 3.0, brand actions will require increased visibility as social media will be the launchpad to bring audiences not only on board with, but inside the metaverse. “

Gaby Arriaga, Founder, Leonardo1452

“A new verse in the book: Face’book’ with its recent addition of Meta’verse’ is integrating its various social media and tech projects. For example one’s digital identity will bridge one’s Facebook profile and one’s VR/metaverse presence.”

Rajesh Mehta, Chief Strategy Officer & Dhruv Gaur, Consultant, Digital Marketing, Medulla Communications

TOP 3 TRENDS FOR INFLUENCER MARKETING 2022

#1 TREND FOR INFLUENCER MARKETING

INFLUENCER ECONOMY IS BOOMING

No sign of a bubble bursting here. Quite the contrary, as influencers are becoming household names not only on the channels, but on store shelves as well. Brands will face new questions: not only whether to use influencers, but whether to collaborate or compete with them.

“Whether launching an NFT, podcast, e-book or eCommerce store, influencers are no longer just influencers carrying brand messaging. They are becoming brands in their own right, thus, forgoing the need to deal with the middleman via traditional influencer partnerships. Therein lies a massive threat to what once was the influencer marketing model. - - Although such activity works wonders for the influencer’s empire, at what expense is the phenomena on digital advertising and the future of influencer marketing? Presumably, as influencer owned brands continue to emerge, traditional brands will need to invest heavily in alternative means of humanising their product in innovative formats to compete.”

**Jemma Parkin, Senior Account Manager,
The Hallway**

“We’re tired of superficial influence and have turned to passionate and creative educators. With the rise of paid subscription services such as Patreon and Substack, creators are finding new and inventive ways to monetise their content beyond brand partnerships. NFTs went mainstream in 2021, offering another innovative way for creators to take control and engage their fans, giving them a piece of them to ‘own’. In 2022, we also expect to see more creators extending this control to other business ventures and e-commerce, with more influencer-owned brands and product lines released to a captive audience.”

Amy Bottrill, Social Account Director, Launch

“One of the key areas we expect to see influencer marketing heading is to support social commerce, seeing more trends like #tiktokmademebuyit. - - What’s exciting about this for marketers is that influencers can become crucial drivers in converting awareness into online sales. What’s interesting to note is that shoppers on social aren’t just scrolling and clicking “buy now” on sponsored ads to shop. In reality, social media has become a consumer touchpoint for every stage of the purchase journey – across almost every product category.”

**Megan Perks, Executive Creative Director,
Joe Public United**

#2 TREND FOR INFLUENCER MARKETING

IT'S A CREATOR GOLD RUSH

As the talk has shifted from influencers to creators, the whole scene has diversified. Whilst the first are focused on impact-over-followers the latter are more in it for the sheer urge to create content – be that on clay works, childcare, plastic surgery or whatever. This democratization serves us all, with our random niche interests.

“The prediction is that over the next 5 years, 1 billion people will self-identify as a creator. In reality, the vast majority of these 1 billion people aren’t likely to become social media megastars, rather everyday people fulfilling a basic human need to feel empowered and garner the support of a community through a creative outlet.”

**Jemma Parkin, Senior Account Manager,
The Hallway**

“The new creator class will consist of TikTok and YouTube doctors, lawyers, scientists, teachers and beyond. This means brands will have to evolve their approach of how they measure success with creator partnerships. It will be less about maximizing the highest number of views, but rather about authentically reaching smaller, more niche target audiences.”

**Adaobi Ugoago, Senior Creative Strategist,
Day One Agency**

“One of the most interesting trends to watch is the growing level of influence that content creators have in the social environment. And I don’t refer about “classic” influencers, celebrities, or public figures, but about digital-born creators who showcase their talents and find pleasure in creating relatable or unique content. And I think that TikTok as a platform has accelerated this behavior and gave people a safe space to experiment. It has shown that anyone can use social media to share their skills, talents, and authenticity to build a community around them.”

**Oana Oprea, Head of Digital Planning, Jam
Session**

#3 TREND FOR INFLUENCER MARKETING

IN-HOUSE MEETS INFLUENCERS

It is only natural as the next step in tightening the relationships between brands and influencers: the recruitment. The best of the influencers have surely gained a good understanding of how to build and nurture an audience. A set of skills and a mindset that most brands can benefit from.

“While influencer marketing 1.0 featured celebrities doing TV spots for perfume brands, 2.0 featured Instagram influencers posing with detox teas. Influencer marketing 3.0 is here and is more than just one-off endorsements. Influencers are now creators, and even (we’re seeing lately) becoming creative directors and getting hired brand-side.”

**Adaobi Ugoago, Senior Creative Strategist,
Day One Agency**

“Brands have already started introducing creators from the ideation stage and even given them senior in-house roles (see Molly-Mae’s role as Creative Director at PrettyLittleThing): in 2022, we expect to see more creators getting bigger pieces of the business pie.”

Amy Bottrill, Social Account Director, Launch

“With this evolution of power plus the ownership of data-driven results, we will see influencers become an extended part of the marketing function, with the ability to feedback and influence strategy. Impacting the way teams and ultimately brands function, opening up the planning process to include key stakeholders such as influencers.”

Emily Ostrowska, Social Strategist, Culture

THE 3 BUBBLING UNDER TRENDS

#1 BUBBLING UNDER TREND

Elderly onboard

“As per China’s last census, people aged 60 or over account for 18.7% of the population. In addition, the China National Committee on Ageing estimated the silver market is worth USD \$588 billion. The digital realm is catering to this demographic. For example, food delivery company Ele.me launched an elderly-friendly app in 2021, with larger icons and fonts to simplify the delivery process. – – Additionally, before Singles’ Day 2021, the world’s largest shopping festival, Alibaba launched a ‘senior mode’ on its e-commerce platform Taobao, which included voice-assisted technology and simplified navigation tools.”

James Hebbert, Managing Director, Hylink UK

“Do post-pandemic people still have the desire to return to the stores? – – The roles are reversing: older generations are approaching digital channels for the first time because of their bigger fear of COVID, whereas younger generations, when the experience is there, may feel more empowered to return to the stores. This creates new paradigms for marketers, especially on social media, and opens up new and different channels to reach the different types of users, changing the way and the places we use to speak to these age groups.”

Silvia Tasso, Senior Digital Strategist & Francesca Trevisan, Digital Strategist, Different

#2 BUBBLING UNDER TREND

Short video first

“ –We already live in a video-first social world, and we should plan the content accordingly. Yes, long videos have their charm, but people don’t necessarily expect that from brands. Short content series, in different formats, originals or adapted to trends manage to perform better and keep the audience engaged and receptive. In this sense, I believe that Instagram Reels is a format which must be considered more by brands because it brings exposure and an element of novelty on the Instagram static feed. ”

Oana Oprea, Head of Digital Planning, Jam Session

”Short formats will continue to be the most consumed formats. Therefore, in 2022, we should expect to see an increase in creators of content that is usually formal and serious, such as medicine, finance or law. These new creators will embrace the short format in order to make their content entertaining, to the point and engaging for their audience. In addition, with the launch of YouTube Shorts, creators will have more and more options for short-form video.”

Gaby Arriaga, Founder, Leonardo1452

#3 BUBBLING UNDER TREND

Ambassadors over influencers

“Selecting brand ambassadors instead of “one shot” influencers is definitely a key trend that will still grow strong in 2022. As everyone is looking for authenticity in social media, long term partnerships between influencers and brands can really make a difference. Best ads don’t feel like ads, so showing love for the product or service over a long period of time and putting focus on how it fits into their lifestyle will result in more positive perception of both – the brand and the influencer.”

Michał Kaliściak, Head of Content & Moderation, 180heartbeats +JUNG v MATT

“Social media influencer marketing is becoming over saturated. It is now a challenge for brands and marketers to recalibrate their KOL marketing strategy from just tapping KOLs to really cultivate brand advocates, develop incentive programs to build long-term relationships with influencers, and vet KOLs that put out more authentic content. When we do social listening studies for our clients that have influencer marketing campaigns, we see that consumers typically engage well on KOLs that exude authenticity.”

Kei Obusan, Senior Data and Insights Manager, Radarr

3 SOCIAL TRENDS FOR HEALTHCARE

#1 TREND FOR HEALTHCARE

Healthcare goes edutainment

”Particularly interesting [recent trends which will evolve in 2022] have included the rise of direct messaging channels and apps to communicate, whether it is a doctor providing personalized advice and content to a patient over WhatsApp, tele-consults or Facebook Messenger, or patients sharing experiences with each other on closed Telegram or Facebook groups. Also, the proliferation of ‘edutainment’ on channels such as TikTok and TikTok Docs has also been significant with both healthcare professionals (HCPs) and the general public contributing health and wellness advice, ‘hacks’ and education.”

Monika James, General Manager, Healthy Thinking Group Asia

”Videos are likely to be leveraged even more, as the preferred method of content consumption. From the small videos phenomenon to Twitter & LinkedIn getting on the video content bandwagon and TikTok experimenting with eCommerce, these trends are here to stay. Likewise for pharma industry, videos help deliver disease related content, training material etc. in an engaging way.”

Rajesh Mehta, Chief Strategy Officer & Dhruv Gaur, Consultant, Digital Marketing, Medulla Communications

#2 TREND FOR HEALTHCARE

Must fight the misinformation

“65% of Covid-19 anti-vaccine misinformation and conspiracy theories are attributable to just 12 people” Report from the Center for Countering Digital Hate, March 2021. With a combined following of over 59 million people across their social media platforms, this staggering statistic highlights just how much social media enables misinformation to spread out of control. – For pharma companies operating in these channels, the key is to establish credibility so to be seen as a trustworthy ally in the spread of scientific and fact-based information, whilst still balancing this with engaging angles that appeal to the target audience.”

Monika James, General Manager, Healthy Thinking Group Asia

”In the US, the recent whistleblower testimonials, the release of internal platform research and independent analysis of preference algorithms are raising increased concerns around healthcare misinformation and negative body images and how that affects users.”

Christopher Dimmock, SVP Integrated Strategy, Abelson Taylor

#3 TREND FOR HEALTHCARE

Influencers cut out the middlemen

”From pharma and healthcare companies POV, influencers as KOLs will be leveraged even more. – Influencer Marketing budgets will also increase thanks to the latest live-streaming shopping platforms that offer an easy way to buy anything during a specific time-window, from drop-collections to collectibles.”

Rajesh Mehta, Chief Strategy Officer & Dhruv Gaur, Consultant, Digital Marketing, Medulla Communications

”Influencer marketing in the pharma space is well established, particularly with healthcare professionals. Leveraging Key Opinion Leaders in professional social media like Figure 1 or doximity as well as public platforms like Facebook is instrumental in informing peers and engaged patient populations. – It is also important to identify and support patient advocacy groups active with social platforms.”

Christopher Dimmock, SVP Integrated Strategy, Abelson Taylor

3 QUICK QUESTIONS

TRENDS 2022

CAMPAIGNS VS. ALWAYS-ON

“Campaign – it’s the only strategy that allows you to reach the goal without the intervention of external factors.”

Lukas Hardy, Social Media Manager & Pancho González, Chief Creative Officer, Inbrax

“They work hand in hand with each other. In order to grow a brand voice, you need a boost of individual campaign promotions, but in order to retain those consumers you need an always on approach to stop those efforts going to waste with a loss in interest.”

Shannon Osborne, Head of Digital, Osaka Labs

“One of our strategists proposed a theory recently that really resonated with me as a creative, she noted that “Always-on” is about putting the brand first and very much a push strategy that’s interruptive. What we can look to do in 2022 is “Always-there” which places the user first and is about creating content that is relevant and well placed for the audience to naturally discover, this content becomes desired and sought out. So my answer would be a combination.”

Megan Perks, Executive Creative Director, Joe Public United

“With our technology continuing to shame us for our (admittedly shameful) screen time, we expect brands to be just as tuned in as we are. Trends can both catapult to a crescendo and vanish within a matter of hours, so social needs to always be ‘on’ and ready to react - there’s no rest for the wicked.”

Amy Bottrill, Social Account Director, Launch

“Brands are built over time and are the accumulation of a multitude of touchpoints and messages. It’s much easier to build a feeling with your audience over the course of a year through consistent messaging, reinforcing your brand values and positioning.”

Emily Ostrowska, Social Strategist, Culture

“We feel that always-on is more important and effective than a campaign strategy. Through an always-on approach, we have access to consistent data that can inform decisions in real time. In contrast, if you run campaigns the data collected to compare and contrast may not be usable due to the changing nature of social media.”

Kevin Fernandez, Social Media Producer, Adolescent Content



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TRENDS 2022

PAID VS. ORGANIC

“When you go to all the effort of strategising and crafting content, least you can do is get it out there to your audience. We follow the evidence backed theory around driving reach as the ultimate way to grow your brand, in addition to creativity. And while the social economy is constructed as such, we will need to pay for scaled attention.”

Emily Ostrowska, Social Strategist, Culture

”Investing in paid media is undoubtedly the best way to tactically contribute to strategic marketing efforts, particularly for those looking to further reach and in the longer term, achieve sustained brand benefit.”

Jemma Parkin, Senior Account Manager, The Hallway

”Organic and Paid go hand-in-hand, but if we have to pick one, Paid still takes priority. Paid content will ensure brands reach at least a baseline of your target audience, securing a certain level of awareness for further engagement and retargeting down the purchasing funnel.”

Carol Chan, Managing Director, Comms8

“We must focus on organic content as it is the hallmark of our brands. However, we also know that in order to reach and impact the audience, we must amplify these efforts with paid media campaigns.” **Mar Camps, Digital Director, Atrevia**

“Brands should focus more on coming up with organic content because due to the recent changes in social platforms’ algorithms, we now learn that suddenly, organic is no longer dead! Consumers engage with social media content that are authentic, relevant, and creative.” **Kei Obusan, Senior Data and Insights Manager, Radarr**

“Both are important and it’s best when they work together. While paid will always get the eyeballs, it’s organic that will more likely get the engagement. A mix is always key.reach, but you also need content that’s interesting to your audience.”

Adaobi Ugoago, Senior Creative Strategist, Day One Agency



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TRENDS 2022

CONTENT-FIRST VS. CHANNEL-FIRST

“Channel is getting more fragmented than ever, audience switching from channel to channel for content; they are now savvier and more selective with the content they consume. Content is the ultimate driver for the audience to discover and engage with your brand. So with the change of PIPL (Personal Information Privacy Law) and cookies rule, brands can no longer rely on the need to focus on creating quality content specific to each target audience group to deliver the message.”

Carol Chan, Managing Director, Comms8

“The channels simply don’t differ that much. If something unique does come up, someone else WILL clone it. Clubhouse Craze envelops the internet? Twitter launches “Spaces” audio rooms. If you have a good story, a good strategy, and good content, your audience will hear you.”

Lucas Florian, Unit Director, PIABO

“Great content is shareable content and transcends platforms: just take a look at the rise of meme accounts on Instagram, which largely lift relatable tweets and repackage them to serve on a different platform, against all the algorithm odds. How many of us finally downloaded TikTok in the UK in 2021 thanks to hearing a Scottish postman’s sea shanties on the evening news?”

Amy Bottrill, Social Account Director, Launch

“There’s actually no way that one piece of content will work on the same level of effectiveness on every platform. Different channels need different approaches to content (first think through the main differences between platforms such as user experience and formats).” **Michał Kaliściak, Head of Content & Moderation, 180heartbeats +JUNG v MATT**

“Channels are always the main source of inspiration, because they come with different user behaviors, formats, tools, and trends that can incorporate any type of content.”

Oana Oprea, Head of Digital Planning, Jam Session

“Both. It depends on the goal of the campaign because when the goal is storytelling content comes first and it then gets delivered on specific channels. But if the goal is to push users to take a certain action we will start from the analysis of channels to then create content that is relevant to the channels and that will bring people to that specific action..” **Silvia Tasso, Senior Digital Strategist & Francesca Trevisan, Digital Strategist, Different**

CONTENT
FIRST

CHANNEL
FIRST

INTERVIEWS
INTERVIEWS
INTERVIEWS
INTERVIEWS
INTERVIEWS
INTERVIEWS
INTERVIEWS

180HEARTBEATS + JUNG V MATT

**Michał
Kaliściak,
Head of
Content &
Moderation**



180HEARTBEATS + JUNG V MATT (POLAND)

180heartbeats + JUNG v MATT is an independent interactive agency, established in Warsaw in 2007. Creativity, independence, and faith in the power of innovation are amongst the greatest values, driving the agency. Our mission is: creating brand excitement and partnering with brands that want to make a change.

”Selecting brand ambassadors instead of “one shot” influencers is definitely a key trend that will still grow strong in 2022.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

Responsibility and transparency. These trends not only concern the brands but also the influencers. Companies now are more consumer-oriented – they show how they take care of their safety and are more aware of the cultural impact they have, especially on younger generations. Influencers' channels have become partly information hubs for followers where social, political and cultural events can be discussed. They themselves have become the people that many listen to and look up to. However, with power

comes responsibility – messages that they put on social media have to be well researched and transparent in order to keep the authenticity. This also involves showing clear terms of collaborating with brands. fanbase.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

“About 90% of consumers will buy from a brand after following them on social media” says Sprout Social. Which is actually way more than even our social media team could have expected. This should be a main trigger

for brands and agencies to keep their platforms alive. Keeping this in mind brands should constantly build and check the level of engagement and chosen objective effectiveness indicators. Those should be indicators of real performance and customer interests. Never stop building brand's consistency of communication – and try to look at your content from a customer's perspective.

The ever-growing popularity of TikTok forced Instagram to launch its own counterpart, Instagram Reels. We have already seen it happen once, in 2016, when Instagram copied some of the mechanics we knew from Snapchat and launched Instagram Stories.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Selecting brand ambassadors instead of “one shot” influencers is definitely a key trend that will still grow strong in 2022. As everyone is looking for authenticity in social media, long term partnerships between influencers and brands can really make a difference. Best ads don’t feel like ads, so showing love for the product or service over a long period of time and putting focus on how it fits into their lifestyle will result in more positive perception of both – the brand and the influencer. Both can only gain from this approach and secure their credibility in the eyes of their audience. Influencers are also getting better and better at creating their own personal brands, whose biggest value is consistent and – more than ever – coherent communication (on content and visual level).

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Well created always-on communication will assure the brand voice will stay coherent and build wanted brand image over a long period of time which will directly influence credibility.

Paid or Organic

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Both. Paid and organic cannot be separated anymore. The relevant idea is the most important part when thinking about the content and it can make it go viral. However, it should be well boosted to achieve desired results for a brand.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

There's actually no way that one piece of content will work on the same level of effectiveness on every platform. Different channels need different approaches to content (first think through the main differences between platforms such as user experience and formats).

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

This year we should highlight the campaign that combined passion for history with fighting for the right to show nudity, all done by city public officials. When art containing nude scenes from Viennese museums was banned from the most popular social media platforms due to censorship, they turned to OnlyFans where explicit content is more than welcome. The Vienna Tourist Board started publishing their pictures of the previously banned art and short descriptions in order to promote the museums. By this move they created one of the most memorable campaigns that flipped the script by combining two things that usually do not match – official institution with media that is mostly known for its sexual content and made a significant stand on censorship on the Internet.

ABELSON TAYLOR

**Christopher
Dimmock, SVP
Integrated
Strategy**



ABELSON TAYLOR (USA)

Abelson Taylor is a healthcare and wellness marketing agency that delivers a return on imagination. From strategy to insights to creative to tech, we're imaginative in all the ways that influence market behaviors and delivers what matters for our clients: improving health and wellbeing while providing tangible, measurable market results that grow your brand.

“Leveraging Key Opinion Leaders in professional [healthcare] social media like Figure 1 or Doximity as well as public platforms like Facebook is instrumental in informing peers and engaged patient populations.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

Working in the healthcare space, we are seeing two interrelated trends that have a significant impact on how and where we recommend our clients participate on social media platforms. In the US, the recent whistleblower testimonials, the release of internal platform research and independent analysis of preference algorithms are raising increased concerns around healthcare misinformation and negative body images and how that affects users. As a reaction to

privacy concerns, Meta and other social media platforms are making the ability to provide information to potential patient types more difficult. As platforms evolved their content guidelines, it is even more important that appropriate informational content be provided and promoted to support users' wellbeing.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

A survey of more than 6,000 10-18-year-olds from June to August last year found that about

50% of children had experienced at least one kind of cyberbullying in their lifetime, according to a report published in February by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC).

This is a staggering indication of the effect of social media on the mental health and development of children. Counter content and the development of new protocols is needed to help keep our children safe. Marketers have an opportunity to help drive this by supporting and promoting content and platform reforms that provide both freedom of expression but also a healthy psychological environment.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Influencer marketing in the pharma space is well established, particularly with healthcare professionals. Leveraging Key Opinion Leaders in professional social media like Figure 1 or Doximity as well as public platforms like Facebook is instrumental in informing peers and engaged patient populations. Due to regulatory issues, it is essential that pharma brands are actively listening to all relevant conversations and that any content provided be clearly identifiable as promotional. Patient testimonials, particularly celebrity patients and caregivers are an effective form of social influence that can be delivered through a variety of platforms. It is also important to identify and support patient advocacy groups active with social platforms.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Always-on. We leverage social platforms for disease education and generating awareness and patient dialogue.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Both. These are balancing elements. Paid helps drive awareness while organic helps enable engagement.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Interdependent. We focus on the market behaviors that we are attempting to influence then identify the channels that reach or audience and the appropriate content for those channels.

ADOLESCENT CONTENT

**Kevin
Fernandez,
Social Media
Producer**



ADOLESCENT CONTENT (USA)

Founded in 2013, we are a global gen z studio: with advertising agency, production company, media division, digital platform and original content focused on authentically reaching the teen and youth audience with commercial and entertainment-driven content made by youth for youth.

”As a Gen Z marketing agency, we know that younger consumers have an aversion towards being “sold to”. By using an organic approach we are fostering an authentic connection with our community at scale.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

This may hurt some feelings, but in 2022 TikTok will overthrow Instagram as the most important platform for social media marketing.

A few years ago, Instagram was the end all be all when it came to social media marketing. It was growing very fast and yielded high ROI's, but that's all changing now because of TikTok. With an active user base of 1 billion (poised to be 1.5 billion in the next year), a growth fueled by the pandemic, TikTok gave rise to short-

form content and ushered in a new era of social media marketing.

Over the last year, TikTok's presence and dominance has been felt on a global scale, but particularly on Instagram. While it may have not been a huge indicator of its fall in popularity, when Instagram introduced Reels it signaled a huge shift in how we consume content. While Instagram poured endless resources into making its platform more e-commerce friendly, it ignored the growing demand for short-form video content. Now, TikTok has captured that market and Instagram is doing its best to catch up.

Most importantly, TikTok's knack for virality will push it over the edge in 2022 as the social media platform for marketers to be on.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

To continue our praise of TikTok, below are two statistics that we found the most interesting this year.

- TikTok grew from 689 million to 1 billion active users in 2021. That's a 45% increase from January 2021 to September 2021. (To put this into perspective, Instagram's monthly active users grew at a rate of 6% in 2020)
- Over the last year, search demand for TikTok has grown by 173%.

While many businesses are hesitant to invest in TikTok due to the reliability of Facebook and Instagram, these numbers are making a compelling case to do otherwise.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

In 2022 we're predicting another strong year for creators as competition amongst social platforms continues to increase.

As data has shown, audiences will follow creators wherever they go which makes creator engagement a key point of contention between social media platforms. This year there was a strong emphasis from each of the social media platforms on providing tools to their creators to better help them monetize and manage their online businesses. This effort will only continue

to get much more competitive between TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat.

Platforms are beginning to understand the value these creators bring and because of it the influencer marketing economy will blossom in 2022.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

We feel that always-on is more important and effective than a campaign strategy. Through an always-on approach, we have access to consistent data that can inform decisions in real time. In contrast, If you run campaigns the data collected to compare and contrast may not be usable due to the changing nature of social media.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Organic. Always organic. As a Gen Z marketing agency, we know that younger consumers have an aversion towards being “sold to”. By using an organic approach we are fostering an authentic connection with our community at scale.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

This is a tough one, but we say content first! This is because with a content first approach we give ourselves the opportunity to think big and then refine our thoughts to fit each channel.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

One of our favorite social media campaigns this year was McDonald's collaboration meals with Saweetie/BTS. These were amazing campaigns that allowed people to see McDonald's in a different way. It wasn't just accessible, as McDonald's is affordable, but seen as an opportunity for fans of a certain celebrity/influencer to authentically engage with a brand. For example, sharing photos of your McDonald's meal with the special BTS packaging or posting a blind reaction eating Saweetie's burger stuffed with fries.

This collaboration demonstrates the value that celebrities/influencers have when it comes to capturing new audiences. By activating a celeb-

rity/influencer, brands have access to hundreds of thousands, if not millions of consumers ready to engage with that brand — especially when those consumers are mobilized “stans” of a certain public figure.

In 2022, brands will continue to embrace celebrity/influencers for future product launches and tap into thriving communities to grow brand awareness and increase sales. Telling is the fact that in late 2021, Popeye's established a partnership with Saweetie-adjacent rapper, Megan Thee Stallion, so we expect to see an increase in these brand collabs rooted in accessibility and stan culture.

ATREVIA

**Mar Camps,
Digital
Director**



ATREVIA (ES)

We are a global Positioning and Strategic Communication company, the biggest in Iberia and with presence in Latin America. Our offices are composed of 15 countries, and our network of partners allows us to gain a global coverage for our customers. With almost 420 professionals, 30 nationality and multidisciplinary profiles, we are able to provide integrated solutions in over 20 areas of specialization. These include: Marketing and Communications, Corporate Affairs, Culture and People Engagement, and Data Analytics.

”We must focus on organic content as it is the hallmark of our brands. However, we also know that in order to reach and impact the audience, we must amplify these efforts with paid media campaigns.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

The creation of organic content, and its subsequent investment, is a trend that will continue to increase.

Right now, we are noticing a substantial growth in sophisticated forms of communication in content creation; and, as a result, an economic effort for companies because of it. These include content in real-time, valuable audio content, collaborations with other creators, etc.

TikTok has surpassed the 1 billion user mark in September 2021. That made it the 7th most popular social network in the world. This social media app is a very dynamic requires special attention— not only creatively but also in terms of strategy. Therefore, companies must listen at all the times to what is being said to offer relevant content.

Interestingly, another trend that surfaced this year was the appearance and acceptance of Clubhouse. Although it is difficult to forecast how this social media will evolve, the truth is that the creation of content for brands in this social network is expensive and will be a challenge for brands.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Expenditure on advertising accelerated during 2021. According to Emplifi report, social media played a key role in the ad market.

Irrefutably, the pandemic resulted in a radical shift in what we know as consumer culture; and, naturally, this has affected the way advertisers carry out advertising campaigns.

Its investment, notably on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, increased during 2020—primarily in North America. In parallel, it showed relative stability in most markets, until the beginning of 2021. Interestingly, here we find a peak that attests to its aforementioned growth. This change is more evident if we compare the second quarter of 2020 with its counterpart in 2021—as this show a growth of almost 50%.

However, it is not just about Facebook and Instagram. In fact, other research has shown that consumers may be more receptive to ads on smaller channels. For example, a study by Kantar found that users ranked TikTok ads as more enjoyable and inspiring than ads seen on other social media platforms. Furthermore, a Nielsen study funded by Snapchat found that ads on Snapchat had more reach than TV—and, led to greater awareness and purchase-intent.

As a result, companies will begin to increase their budget on their respective marketing plans.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Brands have greatly benefitted from influencer marketing strategies in the past; and, know what to expect from them. Unlike in the beginning of the social media era, content creators are now more niche. Therefore, we can currently see that this sector offers a much a more complex and competitive strategy than anticipated.

For example, TikTok has reinvented influencer marketing strategies in the sense that it has made them more approachable to users. Interestingly, it has done so through four fundamental tools that, in other social media platforms, are being outsourced: video, natural and homemade content, role of nano-influencers that become viral, and long-term collaborations (with subsequent TikTok challenges) that invite users to mimic these influencers.

In my opinion, these four aspects will continue to grow for influencer marketing strategies—as it has the potential to return the reputation that was slowly withering.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Both campaigns and omnipresent content are important because they simultaneously attract new audience and infatuate the ones that already existed. But, if I had to choose, I would say omnipresent content, undoubtedly.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

We must focus on organic content as it is the hallmark of our brands. However, we also know that in order to reach and impact the audience, we must amplify these efforts with paid media campaigns.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

To understand a social media channel, it is essential to look at the audience: what they expect to find within that platform. Once you understand how they behave within each social media channel, you can create content that adapts to both of these necessities.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

There have been a lot of innovative and creative campaigns this year and it is very difficult to say which is the best one.

But if I really need to mention one, I would choose the launch of @SpainSays. This is because of the campaign's honesty and authentic "coolness" factor. But, also, because they guys perfectly used social media networks to their advantage.

COMMS8

**Carol Chan,
Managing
Director**



COMMS8 (UK/HK)

Comms8 is an award-winning cross-border B2B and B2C marketing agency that focuses on data, agility and purpose in brand strategy. With teams located across both Europe and Asia, we help international brands grow in the Asian and Chinese markets.

“Content will be more critical than ever. Brands will need to create content relevant to each segment for targeting, instead of one size fits all strategy in the past.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

Relationship is particularly essential in China, and it's the foundation of most businesses. According to a McKinsey report, in the post-pandemic era, 90% of B2B decision-makers expect the remote and digital model to be the main channel for engaging with existing customers and prospects. In China, online social media platform such as WeChat contributes to 20% of the B2B sales revenue during COVID, compared to only 5% from email marketing.

Most people would think WeChat is only a messenger and social media, but WeChat is way more than that. It is what we call a 'Super App' in China, with its ecosystem consisting of search, social, video, payment, advertising, gaming, and beyond. It has a whopping 902 million daily users, and WeChat boasts nearly 410 million audio and video calls per day, making it an ultimate powerhouse. WeChat is the core in B2B marketing.

With the implementation of PIPL (Personal Information Privacy Law) in China in Nov 2021, the law reinforces companies to collect data for a reasonable and disclosed purpose. The law is hitting the marketing industry and brands with a big slap. As it means making B2B companies

more challenging to target their already niche audience down the purchasing funnel, given its long decision cycle, high opportunity cost and high purchase size.

One of the B2B digital marketing tactics was targeting prospects through 3rd party cookies in DSP pool. But the PIPL would mean it will no longer be as easy as before in China. B2B marketers are thinking hard to move away from relying on the 'Public Traffic 公域' i.e. 3rd party data pool from the external channels and networks). Instead, they focus on converting the traffic into their owned channels for acquiring leads in 'Private Traffic 私域'.

WeChat is one of the key Private Traffic channels for acquiring leads, and therefore, Social CRM is vital for B2B marketing.

SCRM (Social Customer Relationship Management) system is incredibly sophisticated in China, where brands can engage with users who follow and engage with the brand content through AI-chatbot system on WeChat. The system automatically captures users' behaviour in the WeChat official account, categorises and identifies the new leads in the CRM database, scores each lead based on engagement and interest, and sends the prospects with the relevant article or content to them on WeChat messenger.

B2B tends to have a longer purchasing funnel, and the SCRM system can nurture the sales leads. Companies use the WeChat CRM system for remarketing prospects using automated one-on-one messages and sharing specific relevant content or reports based on the cate-

gory. And then SCRM system could further classify the lead based on how warm or cold their response is for the sales team to follow up.

Brands can no longer rely on 3rd party data for targeting audiences and bombarding them with the brand message. Instead, they need to rethink their content strategy – how to use relevant content that delivers authentic value to engage with the audience and have a meaningful dialogue with them. In 2022, given that 90% of B2B companies will still see digital platforms will be key in marketing and sales strategy, we will see more B2B companies start to emphasise social media platforms and upgrade the official account with SCRM. The move will enable companies to retarget the prospects through 1st party cookies for effective lead generation.

Content will be more critical than ever. Brands will need to create content relevant to each segment for targeting, instead of one size fits all strategy in the past.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Whilst marketers are thinking to create more content, video and integrating more function to the social media page, we see a contradicting trend in China, especially over the past year.

China's 'sinking markets' (下沉市场) refer to the markets of tier-3 or lower cities and rural areas. Internet penetration, plus the ubiquity of smartphones there, has lured internet players to tap into the under-penetrated sinking markets. In 2020, the share of mobile internet users in sinking markets rose to nearly 60%, from 50% in 2018.

The internet users in the lower-tier cities tend to use valued mobile phones rather than the usual suspect of smartphones with large storage and high loading speed. The valued mobile phone

provides a rather basic feature and limits storage and performance capabilities. This leads to the lower tier internet users being reluctant to use 'Super app' or consume heavy social content as it would slow down the phone and take up lots of storage and bandwidth in the phone.

The sinking markets drive marketers and apps to rethink how they should jump on the bandwagon to acquire this potential market. One of the interesting trends is that many social media platforms are launching what we call the "Lite" version of the app, which essentially removes all the fancy features and keeps only the app's essential features.

Lite app user penetration is already 42.9% in 2020, by Jun 2020, there were over 300million Lite app users in China, and we expect the figure is even more significant in 2021. The Lite social media app emphasises on user experience. More rewarding users, less about commercials.

So when brands think about engaging with users in China, it is less is more. Not merely about packing all content in one place and developing all the fancy features. It's about first identifying your geo-strategy, then setting your social media presence accordingly, and creating content that would work well in light and straightforward format.

When information is overloaded, the audience is more demanding for value exchange with brands. Brands don't need to bombard the audience with new content and video. We have found that if brands publish irrelevant content on social media, it serves as a reminder to unfollow you. So the brands need to pay attention to producing quality content for each of the targeted segments and the specific channel. In the fragmented channel era, and there are always new social media channels come up, it is getting harder for brands to manage multiple channels. In 2022, we see that Less is More, it's

wise to focus your effort on only a few valuable social platforms for your target audience and create good quality content specific to each of your audience segments.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

In 2021, we saw Bottega Veneta take a drastic move and close down its social media presence, cancelling all its official social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, WeChat, Weibo. Yet, it still records growth in sales, posting a 4.8 percent growth over its previous financial year and expecting even greater profits over the course of 2021.

Creative Director Daniel Lee, who also has no Instagram account, told the Guardian: "Social media represents the homogenisation of culture.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TRENDS 2022

Everyone sees the same stream of content. A huge amount of thought goes into what I do, and social media oversimplifies it.” The brand is now putting more weight on brand ambassadors and influencers to formulate the brand story’s narrative in social media, adopting a hands-off policy.

It also goes back to basic and released a digital magazine called ISSUE. Some would say it’s a risky move, and some praised for its bold strategy to focus on the resources.

The BV’s bold move gives us a glimpse that influencer content is more important than ever. It’s even more critical in China, as the one-child policy in 80-90s drove this high purchasing power group to turn to social media for support and peer justification. Influencers and celebrities play a crucial role in glueing the fragmented individuals and creating a sense of belonging. In shopping festivals like Double 11, influencer is the key driver for sales. Some influencers like, Li Jiaqi,

one of the top anchors, listed 439 products on October 20. The cumulative transaction value of the live broadcast room is as high as 11.5 billion yuan, and the estimated sales volume is 37.71 million.

However, in 2021, the Chinese Cyberspace Administration has put its foot down to crack down on the fandom culture in China, partly rooted in various allegations of tax evasion and sexual assault scandals that involved some high-profile celebrities in China. The government concerns about the frenzy around idols and labelled it as ‘toxic idol worship’, and it “disrupts the pure and healthy online ecosystem”. The new rule stops social media like Weibo from publishing celebrity rankings. Teenagers are banned from joining fan clubs. They are also restricted from voting online for idols and spending money on idol-boosting promotion, which includes buying products for which an idol is a spokesperson.

Before the crackdown back in 2020, the market value related to fan economy in China was as big as 4 trillion yuan (USD 618.2 billion). It was common for celebrities and influencers to mobilise their social influence for commercial returns, e.g. assigning different tasks to fans every day to boost the celebrity’s rating. These fan tasks include sharing, liking, commenting on social media posts, sometimes even involve gifting and purchasing products to help boost the celebrity’s sales conversion.

Since its initial statement in June, the Cyberspace Administration of China has deleted more than 150,000 “harmful messages”, closed down more than 4,000 social media accounts and taken at least 39 mobile apps offline. The new rule has shaken up the marketing field, especially in B2C categories.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TRENDS 2022

Though the new rule has less impact on B2B marketing – working with influencers for B2B field has always been challenging. Expertise is critical when it comes to influencer marketing in B2B. B2B influencers need to be someone with in-depth industry expertise, credibility, and require a vast amount of knowledge of the company's product. Audiences look for a genuine review of products and services, and there is no way one can fake it easily, as it usually requires a substantial period to test and try the products. For example, it would take months to reveal the benefit of an energy-saving IT system. And B2B influencers are generally more conscious and selective with their own words, as they have a great stake in their own reputation and credibility in their industry.

In 2022, with B2B buyers continuing to rely on digital content for decision-making, companies are ramping up to convert clients and employees into brand ambassadors. Our client Schneider Electric, for example, runs a series of

consumer stories that highlight the benefits of its energy-saving product EcoStruxure Energy Advisor. By featuring Swire Properties, one of the largest property developers in the Greater China region, Schneider Electric creates credible and convincing whitepapers, case studies and testimonial content. It strategically teamed up with existing client Swire, well known in the region and well respected in the industry, and turned them into a powerful influencer.

B2B companies also realise the power of their employee in the communications strategy, as their employees are already a credible experts in the industry, and they have a direct influence on B2B purchase more than influencers outside of the companies. Leads developed through employee social marketing convert 7x more frequently than other leads. How to harness the employee voice and empower your employee to be your brand advocate is critical in B2B marketing. For example, SAP has been running the employee advocacy programme #LifeInSAP,

encouraging staff to share the behind the scenes stories of working in SAP.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Campaign still has the power to cut through and create impact. When a brand is always-on, it will become a backdrop and white noise, a campaign is essential for injecting clear message or launching a new project/service.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Organic and Paid go hand-in-hand, but if we have to pick one, Paid still takes priority. Paid content will ensure brands reach at least a base-line of your target audience, securing a certain level of awareness for further engagement and retargeting down the purchasing funnel.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Channel is getting more fragmented than ever, audience switching from channel to channel for content; they are now savvier and more selective with the content they consume. Content is the ultimate driver for the audience to discover and engage with your brand. So with the change of PIPL and cookies rule, brands can no longer rely on the need to focus on creating quality content specific to each target audience group to deliver the message.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

NBA up their game riding on the multi-year partnership with Hennessy, the world-renowned cognac brand, and launched a series of basketball challenge social media and event activations around the world in late 2021.

The partnership uses the phrase “The Spirit of the NBA”.

The partnership launched a series of pop-up events globally in Africa, South America, Asia-Pacific and Europe, including the world's highest basketball court on the top of a

skyscraper in Shanghai and a pop-up full court next to the splendid Victoria Harbour in Hong Kong. Local celebrities such as MIRROR attended the event in HK, joined by basketball players and lifestyle and sports influencers. Apart from VIPs, 46 local basketball teams competed in the 4v4 tournament in Shanghai.

The pop-up event offers guests a range of mini-games, DJ live music, and graffiti performances, and of course, NBA x Hennessy cocktails to enjoy.

Some may wonder how NBA and Hennessy could work together? One is a basketball tournament brand, and the other is a spirit brand for over 250 years.

If you look closer at the primary consumer base of NBA and Hennessy, you'd realise that both skew towards the African American community. Cognac, it's a popular drink amongst the Black community in the States, according to the New York Times

More than the glamorous pop-up events in this partnership, the core of this multi-year partnership advocates equality in ethnic groups. The brands worked with the basketball icon Russell Westbrook and created an online social campaign called “Make Moves that Start Movements”. The campaign extends Hennessy's Unfinished Business platform, which is an initiative that seeks to support the Black, Asian and

Latinx small businesses owners affected by the pandemic and has pledged to donate over USD 5 million so far. This CSR initiative brings brand authenticity and meaning to the partnership and resonates with the core target audience of both NBA and Hennessy.

Though it is a shame that we didn't notice much of the CSR initiative in the localised execution in Shanghai and Hong Kong, the brands tactically used the partnership and worked with selected influencers to change the perception of Hennessy in the market as Cognac has been deemed an old-fashion drink in Asia. By creating a series of exclusive stylish events at the unusual spots in the cities and cross-over products, the partnership also helped NBA re-position to appeal to China's affluent audience. Win-Win, the spirit of partnership it is.

CULTURE

**Emily
Ostrowska,
Social
Strategist**



CULTURE (NZ)

We're a socially-led agency, who use the power of social media to deliver business returns. While likes and comments are nice, they often don't make a difference to the bottom line. Our approach is different. Through powerful social listening tools we know what Kiwis are thinking and doing. From there we create digital strategies and social-first ideas that resonate, drive conversation and deliver action.

“The phrase “A brand is what people say about you when you’re not in the room” is more relevant than ever, and with social platforms being a network of different rooms – how can we foster that conversation without being the parent at the party?”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

With the continued distrust with Facebook in addition to the rise of emerging platforms we will continue to see the fragmentation of the attention economy. With communities congregating in pockets of social platforms to rally around niche interests.

As we move forward these are the 3 core pillars that marketers need to be cognizant of:

// Community ecosystems

A network of touchpoints vs. a silver bullet

What this means for marketers is that it's no longer enough to put all your eggs in one basket and instead, a portfolio approach is necessary. Reinforcing, not only marketing effectiveness by appearing on multiple touchpoints, but helping brands tell authentic stories, positioning them as well rounded personalities with communities they care about vs. a one dimensional entity on 'transmit' mode.

This distrust in not only social platforms but the trend with consumers asking more of the brands they engage with will impact not just where brands turn up, but how.

// Community creators

For most brands it is unrealistic to create branded content that can live authentically across multiple platforms, the time and resources that go into such short lived pieces is not sustainable. Especially as we're likely to continue to see greater scrutiny on marketing budgets. We need to work smarter.

As we move (hopefully) out of a COVID world, we will expect to see increased levels of creativity and expression. Born out of the increase in platform capability, but also at a societal level where we're rediscovering the world again. Brands have ridden the coattails of seemingly random creativity and benefitted from these one off creators profiling everyday brands. We

all remember the Ocean Spray / Fleetwood Mac guy - where is he now? Who could've predicted that happening? The challenge we face is that this can come from anywhere at any time.

Is the model of going out to specific influencers with a brief, old hat? How can we foster creativity of the masses and actively spark an Ocean Spray event? Could an 'open source' approach be more effective whereby a brand seeds out challenges around a specific problem to their community networks. This in turn, leads us to the next challenge.

//Community leadership

We need to reimagine what it means when we say 'community management', once the role of an intern to answer customer queries or to shut down keyboard warriors.

In order to fan the flames of creativity and foster authentic communities that take on a life of their own, we need to move to community leader-

ship and community co-creation. Taking time to foster meaningful relationships within interest groups.

This requires a certain type of bravery – your brand doesn't belong to you like you think it does. The phrase "A brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room" is more relevant than ever, and with social platforms being a network of different rooms – how can we foster that conversation without being the parent at the party?

Community leaders, however, can help provide that reassurance by understanding the brand's role and strategic involvement and help craft the culture of these communities.

This calls for slightly nuanced skill sets within agencies and brands, think deep social brand strategy coupled with education within social teams so that they live and breathe the brand as a person. Trust building between agency and

brand to cut down or eliminate lengthy approvals and instill autonomy within teams to proactively foster community creativity.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Less a stat and more of a development, specific to Aotearoa New Zealand, with implications for the rest of the world – this year we saw the launch of Māori TikTok, a dedicated area on the platform that celebrates Māori culture and creators. With the #Māori hashtag receiving 9.7B views to date.

For some time now we have seen social media act as a conduit and connector for marginalised groups, who tend to have higher rates of mental health concerns. Social media can diversify social networks and offer a place of connection

with others. Whilst we absolutely recognise the opposite can be true, we welcome safe spaces online for people to celebrate cultures, beliefs and attitudes.

Brands have been rightly challenged in recent years to increase diversity within their marketing, but we're ever evolving and we're seeing the move from simply reflecting diverse audiences in our creative to working in partnership with communities towards authentic inclusivity.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Despite the rise of more community led, everyday influencers, there is still a place for the more traditional influencer. They offer trusted followers at scale and, if partnered with authentically,

enable brands to tell rich stories through the lens of a content creator who understands their audience.

It's true that influencer marketing has evolved from simply paying for a post, to longer term, ambassadorial type relationships. But, as consumers start to demand more from brands and wise up to the impact of consumerism, we will need to apply greater scrutiny to those we chose to collaborate with – it's important there is a value based and purpose driven alignment. Effective pairing of the right type of influencer and the rise of social commerce can prove to deliver powerful results.

We also see a shift of power that is happening – once at the beck and call of brands – influencers now have product lines themselves and are looking to brands to help their dreams become a reality.

With this evolution of power plus the ownership of data-driven results, we will see influencers become an extended part of the marketing function, with the ability to feedback and influence strategy. Impacting the way teams and ultimately brands function, opening up the planning process to include key stakeholders such as influencers.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Brands are built over time and are the accumulation of a multitude of touchpoints and messages. It's much easier to build a feeling with your audience over the course of a year through consistent messaging, reinforcing your brand values and positioning.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

When you go to all the effort of strategising and crafting content, least you can do is get it out there to your audience. We follow the evidence backed theory around driving reach as the ultimate way to grow your brand, in addition to creativity. And while the social economy is constructed as such, we will need to pay for scaled attention.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

At the heart of content should be the perfect marrying of consumer insight and brand, the way this comes to life across channel can and should vary. As we move to more of a portfolio approach to channel, it's important we never lose sight of the consumer insight that drives great creative ideas.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

An effective and consistent always-on, multi-platform strategy we believe is just as important as executing creative, innovative campaigns and there are some great brands around the world that are doing both.

Fast food Mexican chain Chipotle is a great example of a brand that is constantly innovating and trying new things. Their annual #Boorito Halloween campaign was given a world-first digital makeover this year.

Pre-COVID, the fast food chain ran a long-standing in-store tradition, giving discounted meals for consumers who turn up in costumes on Halloween night. Throughout the years, the campaign had various iterations and little innovative tactics on integrating with TikTok and their other digital platforms.

Tapping into the pop-culture conversation and trend on the 'metaverse', Chipotle opened its first virtual Roblox storefront and built a spooky digital maze full of exclusive branded offers for gamers on the popular gaming platform.

The first 30,000 participants to go through the maze and visit the digital in-game restaurant on the platform would receive a free burrito.

Following the Chipotle Roblox campaign for Halloween, Nike announced they'd created NIKELAND on Roblox; a new place for Nike fans to connect, create, share experiences and compete – building on their goal to turn sport and play into a lifestyle. It's exciting to see the world's biggest brands innovate in 2022 as they push into new platforms and integrate themselves into consumers' world – examples of brand's becoming authentic parts of these online communities.

DAY ONE AGENCY

**Adaobi
Ugoago,
Senior
Creative
Strategist**



DAY ONE AGENCY (USA)

Day One is a creative communications agency with the ambition of stopping the world in its scroll with stories that earn a place in culture.

“With the major influx of people wanting to enter into the creator economy, expect the creator-to-brand ratio to increase. This entrance of creators will also expand beyond ring light owners and selfie-takers.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

The pressure of the pandemic, longer working hours and collective exhaustion has led to burnout for many. Creators, who saw major financial opportunity with the advent of TikTok and Substack, found themselves just as disillusioned with these platforms and at the constant mercy of the algorithm. Unmet expectations and an increasing awareness of labor exploitation has led to what we now call The Great Resignation, an outright revolt against all things work. The subreddit r/antiwork, which was started in 2013, exploded in the past year with droves

of users seeking to find refuge in like-minded spaces where they can vent about employers and ways to “hack” the system.

As a byproduct of this, the “stay at home girlfriend” trend took off on TikTok. With over 22.5M hashtag views, this retro gender trope achieved viral success on the platform with girlfriends and wives sharing their daily routines. According to one famous TikTok which now has 6.8M views, stay at home girlfriends get Botox, go to Pilates, wear expensive clothes (around the house) and eat truffle pizza. While there are of course negative responses to this trend, what’s surprising is the overwhelming amount of positive reaction. From TikTok commenters looking to manifest this SAHG life to tweets talking about the urge to quit work, we saw the aspirational #girlboss of

the 2010s exchanged for the #stayathomegirlfriend.

Looking ahead to 2022, marketers should be aware of consumers seeking new forms of escapism. After the intense events of 2020 and 2021, people are eager to break out of their confines and explore – both IRL and virtually. While some are quitting their jobs or flocking into the metaverse, we are also seeing people are turning to the natural world as a wellbeing resource, to destress and relax. Expect to see a continued interest in functional food and drink (from enhanced cereal and noodles to CBD non alcoholic beverages) and even psychedelics as a whole generation seek balance and a way to optimize their physical and psychological states.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Twenty years ago, when you'd ask an elementary school classroom what they wanted to be when they grew up, you'd hear an array of little voices call out "astronaut!" "lawyer!" "basketball player!" "movie star!" But now, according to Mediakix, 75% of children ages 6 to 17 want to become YouTubers. Creators are the new aspirational target. Disillusionment with traditional forms of employment is giving way to solo-preneurship. For example, Ryan Kaji, the 9-year-old toy-reviewing YouTuber, boasts 31 million subscribers and a net worth of nearly \$30 million. He was the highest paid YouTuber in 2020.

With the major influx of people wanting to enter into the creator economy, expect the creator-to-brand ratio to increase. This entrance of creators will also expand beyond ring light owners and

selfie-takers. The new creator class will consist of TikTok and YouTube doctors, lawyers, scientists, teachers and beyond. This means brands will have to evolve their approach of how they measure success with creator partnerships. It will be less about maximizing the highest number of views, but rather about authentically reaching smaller, more niche target audiences.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

While influencer marketing 1.0 featured celebrities doing TV spots for perfume brands, 2.0 featured Instagram influencers posing with detox teas. Influencer marketing 3.0 is here and is more than just one-off endorsements. Influencers are now creators, and even (we're seeing lately) becoming creative directors and getting hired brand-side. (See Kendall Jenner's role at fashion brand FWRD or Molly May Hague's lucrative gig

at Pretty Little Thing or Dakota Johnson's latest foray into adult toys and accessories.)

In 2022, influencer marketing will be even more about hyper co-collaboration and influencers invested as brand ambassadors through mentorship and incubation programs. This year we saw a number of brands jumping in here. Nordstrom debuted a new ambassador program that gave participants the opportunity to produce content across the Nordstrom social channels. Meanwhile, Everlane launched a fellowship program targeted towards entrepreneurs with early-stage ideas that can reduce the use of new plastics in fashion. Another example of this is Chipotle (#client) which debuted their first ever Creator Class earlier this fall. The inaugural class consists of a troupe of creators focused on working long-term to create best-in-class social content while simultaneously building up each creator's careers.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Always-on content gives you great insight into what truly resonates with your audience on an ongoing basis and can help inform paid and campaign planning.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Both are important and it's best when they work together. While paid will always get the eyeballs, it's organic that will more likely get the engagement. A mix is always key.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Ultimately a good story will transcend any platform. The sheer volume of places and spaces where you can now meet your audience (especially Gen Z) means it's important to think channel-first. When you start by thinking about the channel, you can tweak the content to be more engaging to users on that particular platform.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

Gucci did a great job seamlessly embracing their digital presence this year with its Roblox campaign, Gucci Garden, which went live in May. Getting ahead of the frenzy and fixation on the metaverse, the fashion house unlocked a new approach to social campaigning. In the two-week installation, users on the platform had the ability to go through and experience differently themed rooms as well as try on/buy items. One user made headlines for spending over \$4k on a digital Gucci bag, which that news in of itself points to the larger trend of digital fashion.

In 2022, there will no doubt be more retailers tossing their hat into the metaverse/gaming ring with many brands already showing to be bullish on this new frontier. As the metaverse continues to develop and expand, the onus will be on brands not to just jump into these platforms for the sake of being first-movers, but rather to study the user behaviors and leverage strong platform and brand insights to stand out among the quickly crowded virtual space.

DIFFERENT

**Silvia Tasso,
Senior Digital
Strategist
Francesca
Trevisan,
Digital
Strategist**



DIFFERENT (IT)

Different is a communication company that drives brands to fully express their potential, and to hit people with significant content and messages. With a fluid structure of talented, complete thinkers, Different brings life to the vital energy of a brand.

”As an effect of the pandemic, the boundaries between the real and the virtual world are becoming increasingly blurred: there’s an always greater demand for integration and holistic experiences.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

2020 and 2021 especially have seen the rise of a completely new behavior for users and influencers alike on social media: when once those channels used to be a place where people would share a filtered version of their lives, with the pandemic both famous and regular people have started taking others behind the scenes of their once perfect social media lives, showing a more real, unfiltered version of themselves.

This also goes for brands, whose ethics and social responsibility are increasingly being put to the test by both the newer and even older generations, demanding greater social action and transparency on their activities.

Another effect of the pandemic can be seen in how the boundaries between the real and the virtual world are becoming increasingly blurred: there's an always greater demand for integration and holistic experiences. Brands have to take this into account, creating digital experiences that overlap more and more with people's physical lives. And marketers have to take this into account, considering brands as all-encompassing ecosystems.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Do post-pandemic people still have the desire to return to the stores? There is an interest, but there must be a strong reason why people may want to go back, that is the experience: 83% of consumers believe retailers need to provide more authentic shopping experiences to people like them — meaning there is still plenty of opportunity for brands to grow here, even though about 50% of internet users say they'll be still shopping online more even when the outbreak is over.

In this scenario, roles are reversing: older generations are approaching digital channels for the first time because of their bigger fear of COVID, whereas younger generations, when the experience is there, may feel more empowered to return to the stores.

This creates new paradigms for marketers, especially on social media, and opens up new and different channels to reach the different types of users, changing the way and the places we use to speak to these age groups.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

2021 has been the year where inclusivity has taken the center stage. And in 2022 it will very likely be even more relevant. People do not feel represented in the ads they see, in the shows and movies they watch and in society as a whole: according to data, only one person out of five does.

Hence why, in terms of influencers, users are moving away from celebrities or bigger names and are starting to follow more “niche” influencers or creators who can provide interesting content that feels relatable and representative of them, the way they live and their values.

On the same note, user-generated content, or UGC, is proving more influential than ever on purchasing decisions and at inspiring action among consumers: according to research, UGC is 8.7x more impactful than influencer content and 6.6x more influential than branded content.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Campaigns. Because they allow higher focus on a product, value, offer or specific goal, optimizing investment.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Paid. Because thanks to algorithms almost no one sees organic content anymore.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Both. It depends on the goal of the campaign because when the goal is storytelling content comes first and it then gets delivered on specific channels. But if the goal is to push users to take a certain action we will start from the analysis of channels to then create content that is relevant to the channels and that will bring people to that specific action.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

The Uncensored Library (<https://www.uncensoredlibrary.com/en>) is the most creative and brilliant social media and digital campaign we have seen in 2021.

It puts new media, in this case the very popular online video game Minecraft, to an important social need: becoming a repository for books and writings that are censored in countries where media are controlled by oppressive leaders.

In this case, using Minecraft is not a matter of following a trend but it is a matter of accessibility: the game is still accessible in those countries so it can be used by young people. This is how the game becomes not only a communication channel but a vital one.

What inspires us is the way this new media is being put to a good use reaching the most important target they needed to reach.

ENTERFIVE

**Presh Hunder,
Social Media
Manager**



**Jide Agbana,
Product Mar-
keting Manager**



ENTERFIVE (US / UK / NIGERIA)

Enterfive is an insights agency. Creators of Versus Africa, their flagship product that helps brands get complete, competitive and actionable insights on the African consumer market.

“An influencer marketing strategy dependent more on marketing spend and less on where the trust of the target audience lies will achieve haphazard results.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

Consumers will determine your strategy and tactics.

Various Social Media platforms are evolving due to what their consumers align with and enjoy. In 2022, be ready to do the same. Marketing trends may be transient or long term but, you'll set yourself up for success by being observant and staying on the lookout, monitoring behaviours and conversations of your target audience online.

In 2021, several platforms including TikTok, YouTube and Instagram made changes and updates to areas within the product based on behaviours of their users/Target Demographic. This trend isn't privy to platforms alone as several brands engaged in some social media trends from a marketing perspective based on the patterns, movements and sounds that their audience resonated with. For example, Gen Z (Currently the largest generation on earth) is influencing how brands that target them behave. From ambassador choices to social campaigns, brands are taking Gen Z's perspectives and pain points into consideration as they market on Social Media.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

The average user spends 52 minutes a day on TikTok and 60% of TikTok users are Gen Z.

The platform has become very popular for creative expression utilizing audio and video and Africans are not only consuming its content, but African creators and music artists are attaining TikTok superstar status with the platform. Ckay's Love Nwatiti remix achieved 15 billion views on

TikTok, the result was felt beyond the platform globally as the song was certified platinum and gold in France and the UK respectively.

TikTok has opened up fresh perspectives and opportunities for creators, artists and businesses looking to utilize social media to connect with users on the platform. The right story + personality + sound will serve as foundations for brands looking to leverage the platform in 2022.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Influencer marketing has opened the door to a more personal and friendly approach to marketing. Friendships work based on trust and, influencer marketing works largely due to the 'Trust' factor as well. This approach will continue to thrive but, it will only be successful if 'Trust' in the chosen influencer(s) is present. An influencer marketing strategy, dependent more on marketing spend and less on where the trust of the Target Audience lies will achieve haphazard results.

As people become more authentic, create movements dedicated to being who one is, and speak one's truth, it is likely more trustworthy individuals will continue to trend and gain the trust of people both online and offline. This will increase their value and deliver results to businesses. An example of an influencer currently delivering value to both everyday consumers and brands is Khaby Lame. His content is dedicated to showing users a simpler approach to many things. He is someone users trust and resonates with and this has led to his partnerships with several brands.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

When it comes to Social Media Marketing, there is no straight path to which is more important. This will depend on a mix of things including the willingness to test out different strategies and the use of data and insights to make better-informed decisions.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

We focus more on organic content as it's more suited towards creating a relationship with our audience while letting them in on who we are and our brand offering. It also helps get a glimpse into the kind of content our audience resonate with before we eventually start adding in some marketing spend.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Content. Your goals and objectives would naturally influence what you want to say on Social Media and how you want to say it, when this is created and decided on, one can then do more research into the appropriate channels based on the content style and type, how that aligns with consumers, where the consumers can be found and much more.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

As part of their Self Esteem Project, Dove utilized platforms like Instagram, TikTok and partnered with several influencers to imbibe in girls, messages of body positivity and confidence with their #NoDigitalDistortion campaign. Research carried out has shown that Social Media has played a role in feelings of self-doubt, lack of confidence, increased comparison and anxiety. Doves' use of Social Media to reverse those feelings was brilliant.

From their video advert published on Social Media showing the altered and unaltered versions of everyday girls, the strategic use of influencers, to the creation of pledges and challenges on Social Media, this campaign hit the hearts of girls all over the world. The campaign is grounded in data, insights and meaningful experiences of the Target Audience. In 2022, these are things all businesses and marketing professionals should strive to inculcate when developing campaigns.

THE HALLWAY

**Jemma Parkin,
Senior Account
Manager**



THE HALLWAY (AU)

The Hallway is a full-service advertising agency. We use data to uncover what makes people tick. Then we affect how they feel, think and behave by creating experiences inspired by who they are & where they're at.

“Active Attention Seconds and other attention-based metrics will undoubtedly become standardised measures as the industry works to remove the ambiguities currently riddling media planning and measurement.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

Given the rapid proliferation of screens and increasingly fragmented consumer choice in media (particularly in the social space), social media marketers face increased difficulty in determining where media dollars are best spent and, likewise, appropriately tracking the effectiveness of our choices. To date, there has been far too much reliance on numerically driven media choices, and age-old assumptions, despite there being evidence that not all views are equal.

For comms on social to be affective, marketers must understand the forces in play and measure them accordingly. Only then can we be in true control of how much we move people and the true impact of our communications investments. We know that humans pay very little attention to advertising, especially when it comes to social; switching in and out of attention, on platforms and devices that warrant different levels of attention. So, why do we continue to credit equal value to proxy metrics like ad impressions to inform our media choices?

While a high volume of three-second video views on a video placement could be considered an excellent result on any given platform, the result is still relatively ambiguous. A video view doesn't correlate with the level of attention

given to those three seconds, nor the long-term cognisant effects (the affect) of those three seconds in the context of its placement, platform, or the screen on which it was viewed. Although we may attempt to convince ourselves otherwise, to date, it's been impossible to truly quantify the relative value of the performance of our ads across platforms.

What we're seeing now is the emergence of a new media currency proving to be incredibly powerful for marketers in the comms space for 2022 and beyond. The measure of attention; ensuring those who have the opportunity to see the ad and actually notice it. Rather than planning media by an opportunity to see basis, the dial is shifting towards planning for active attention. Active Attention Seconds and other atten-

tion-based metrics will undoubtedly become standardised measures as the industry works to remove the ambiguities currently riddling media planning and measurement.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

One of the most exciting stats I've seen relates to the identity of one's self and their perceived role on social media. The prediction is that over the next 5 years, 1 billion people will self-identify as a creator. In reality, the vast majority of these 1 billion people aren't likely to become social media megastars, rather everyday people fulfilling a basic human need to feel empowered and garner the support of a community through a creative outlet. Given that our audiences are no longer just passive content consumers, the creative potential will prove limitless for marketers

who strategically curate, direct and empower this talent.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

We're witnessing the diversification of the role of the influencer and subsequently the emergence of a new hybrid breed of specialist influencers. One, in particular, proving to flip the traditional influencer model on its head is the rise of influencers as modern-day entrepreneurs and the commoditisation of the creator economy. Whether launching an NFT, podcast, e-book or eCommerce store, influencers are no longer just influencers carrying brand messaging. They are becoming brands in their own right, thus, forgoing the need to deal with the middleman via traditional influencer partnerships. Therein lies a massive threat to what once was the influencer marketing model.

It's unsurprising really. It's the perfect recipe for commercial success – you've got a guaranteed audience that's highly loyal, trusting, engaged and attuned to your every move. Although such activity works wonders for the influencer's empire, at what expense is the phenomena on digital advertising and the future of influencer marketing? Presumably, as influencer owned brands continue to emerge, traditional brands will need to invest heavily in alternative means of humanising their product in innovative formats to compete. Traditional influencers outside of this newly envisioned and commoditised creator economy are likely to see their validity and potency fade, whilst those venturing into the space are likely to emerge as key competitors to the very brands they once would have partnered with.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Subscribing to either model in isolation poses its own unique set of challenges. Today's brands require holistic content strategies like that of a Hero, Hub, Hygiene model. These three layers produce a steady stream of evergreen content paired with an active presence in market (hygiene), community-building conversations and brand messaging (hub) and big-ticket content to increase reach and drive impact through awareness (hero), and thereby laying the foundations for the perfect storm of consumer loyalty, broad audience reach and discoverability.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Like it or not, social platforms have transformed into pay-to-play spaces, meaning from an effectiveness standpoint, organic social has minimal merit in isolation. With competition for organic reach at an all-time high and ad budgets at a seemingly all-time low, social media marketers have their work cut out for them. Investing in paid media is undoubtedly the best way to tactically contribute to strategic marketing efforts, particularly for those looking to further reach and in the longer term, achieve sustained brand benefit.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

If content is king, then channel rules supreme. Gone are the days of content being channel agnostic – a 'big idea' or stunning piece of creative will only get you so far if developed independently of channel or audience considerations

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

Despite the handful of campaign success stories surfacing this year, TikTok remains a relatively nascent opportunity, with many brands hesitant to migrate onto the platform. While it's less polished as a platform and results remain far from predictable, the opportunity for rapid brand growth proves to make TikTok placements incredibly lucrative (if done correctly).

Costa Coffee's 'The Costa For You' TikTok campaign is an outstanding example of well-crafted, strategic use of the platform. The campaign 'gamed' the TikTok algorithm, subtly touting the Costa menu through 14 creative executions, each encompassing the nuances of a well-known TikTok subculture, served to

the relevant audiences based on their browsing history. Each execution personified the algorithm as the main character of the content through a popular TikTok filter, who fed the viewer a personalised Costa selection based on the nature of their viewing habits.

The campaign's success was undoubtedly driven by its ability to strategically game the native platform affordances of TikTok (in the case of the FYP and subcultures) to serve audiences hyper-personalised, curated content in a way that felt authentic to the platform. This level of clever strategic innovation across platforms will prove critical as audiences continue to demand more from content, particularly in an era driven by hyper-personalised entertainment.

HEALTHY THINKING GROUP ASIA

**Monika James,
General
Manager**



HEALTHY THINKING GROUP ASIA (SG)

Based in Singapore, Healthy Thinking Group Asia is a pioneering team of experienced healthcare strategists, communicators and creatives. We design bespoke, integrated programs and experiences that engage health professionals and their patients.

”We see a shift from influencers (curated content) to content creators (authentic, genuine, and purposeful content). In healthcare we are seeing increasing numbers of ‘Digital Opinion Leaders’, those who are vocal online and actively sharing views, experience and guidance to be seen as trusted health partners within their network of peers and patients.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

The delivery of healthcare has made a monumental shift online in the last 24 months, and this is set to continue and evolve in 2022. Naturally, social media channels have been a significant part of this with both patients and healthcare professionals turning to them to communicate with each other and their peers.

Particularly interesting aspects of this have included the rise of direct messaging channels and apps to communicate, whether it is a doctor

providing personalized advice and content to a patient over WhatsApp, tele-consults or Facebook Messenger, or patients sharing experiences with each other on closed Telegram or Facebook groups. Also, the proliferation of 'edutainment' on channels such as TikTok and TikTok Docs has also been significant with both healthcare professionals (HCPs) and the general public contributing health and wellness advice, 'hacks' and education.

With this shift comes huge implications with regards to misinformation, credibility, authenticity, and trust, and we see these themes playing a huge role in the future of how healthcare marketers participate in the social media ecosystem.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

"65% of Covid-19 anti-vaccine misinformation and conspiracy theories are attributable to just 12 people" Report from the Center for Countering Digital Hate, March 2021.

With a combined following of over 59 million people across their social media platforms, this staggering statistic highlights just how much social media enables misinformation to spread out of control.

Taking the implications of statistics like this a step further, when you consider how much social media is booming amongst older generations and combine it with the fact that those over 65 are more vulnerable to misinformation compared to other age groups, places with rapidly aging populations such as many Asia Pacific nations face an epidemic of their own. There are even some claims within Asian countries that the elderly population is more to 'blame' for perpetuating fake news, and Singapore for example, has enacted the 'Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act' to legally tackle the spread of fake news.

With over 60% of the world's population now online, there is more potential than ever to reach, educate, interact with, and facilitate conversations between target patient groups for a range of health-related topics on social media. For pharma companies operating in these channels, the key is to establish credibility so to be seen as a trustworthy ally in the spread of scientific and

fact-based information, whilst still balancing this with engaging angles that appeal to the target audience. After all, to compete effectively for attention in the social world, we need people to want to consume, interact with and ideally share, our content.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

1. Shift from influencers (curated content) to content creators (authentic, genuine, and purposeful content). In healthcare we are seeing increasing numbers of 'Digital Opinion Leaders', those who are vocal online and actively sharing views, experience and guidance to be seen as trusted health partners within their network of peers and patients.
2. Crossbreeding between content creation and e-commerce – more live streams and live shops with the introduction of 'shop' function in most social media platforms such as Face-

book and Instagram. In pharma we are seeing more companies move to eCommerce channels for their own consumer products, eliminating the middleman and ensuring authenticity of product and the information conveyed about it.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Consumers and healthcare professionals (who are consumers too) want access and short-form content. They care less about high-quality production and more about genuine, relatable content and interactions.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

We need to leverage more on building authentic experiences for our target audiences, especially given the importance of building trust when communicating about health.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

We need to ensure our content is accurate and credible yet addresses a consumer need/aspiration/barrier that resonates with our target audience. In execution, we need to enhance the relevance of our content to the target via an omnichannel approach.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

The local Singapore campaign #Embracing-newnorms by AIA was a notable example of a company using social media to respond in real-time to a crisis facing its stakeholders and positioning themselves as a lifelong partner and holistic ally across many facets of health and wellbeing.

Launched during Singapore's version of lockdown ('Circuit Breaker'), AIA led a range of initiatives to support Singaporeans and Singapore businesses through the many areas

of upheaval being experienced at the time, rallying its consumers and the wider community to 'embrace new norms'. Combining earned and paid media, ambassadors such as David Beckham and other key opinion leaders advocating for self-care, AIA championed its brand promise of 'healthier, longer, better lives' and in the process managed to create real behaviour change with regards to how Singaporeans approach their health and well-being.

This campaign emphasises two key trends that will continue into 2022 and beyond:

- Being seen as a true, trusted partner and credible source of information who is 'there by your side' can reap many rewards, especially in times of crisis.

- More than ever, health is a 'hot' area that is top of mind for everyone. Many companies are finding a way to link their brands to health and wellness, and this creates a lot of noise that marketers need to be aware of as they design and implement their social campaigns.

HYLINK

**James
Hebbert,
Managing
Director,
Hylink UK**



HYLINK (CN / UK)

Hylink is the first natively Chinese digital agency to move West and establish in the UK. Voted the most effective advertising agency in the Asia Pacific region with the prestigious Effie Award, Hylink is China's largest, independent full-service digital agency. Our mission is simple: to creatively bridge the cultural gap in digital marketing between China and the UK.

“Immersive digital experiences created by 5G is the trend that marketers are most excited about, especially in China. - - 5G will enable brand experiences to become more immersive and personalised.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

What 5G can enable (as opposed to just 5G itself)

Immersive digital experiences created by 5G is the trend that marketers are most excited about, especially in China. As a vast country with a population of 1.4 billion and one official language, this set-up has benefits: it allows for new technology and innovation to be rolled out far more effectively than new innovation across Europe that must be reformatted based on country and multiple languages for example. The pandemic

has accelerated China's 5G infrastructure, which will continue to have a direct impact on digital experiences.

As a result, brands in China are no longer restricted to static images, GIFs and carousel displays. Instead, ads are becoming increasingly personalised and memorable. Take for example how 5G has transformed 2D billboard advertisements into eye-catching 3D experiences all over China. As people pass by billboards, products can jump out and swirl around them, instantly grabbing their attention.

As for personalisation, 5G is revolutionising the shopping experience, both offline and online. Offline: a 5G-powered augmented reality mirror

can allow shoppers to virtually try on clothing and experiment with colours and sizes before purchase. Whereas online, users can access augmented reality experiences directly from their smartphone camera. Tech will continue to drive O2O innovation.

Combined with the power of AI, in a live stream hosts could be holding up the same product to millions of people, and simultaneously, each individual viewer's name could appear on the product in real time.

5G will enable brand experiences to become more immersive and personalised.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Elderly-friendly initiatives

There is no shortage of impressive statistics in China, so we will share a more unorthodox theme: the elderly community.

As per China's last census, people aged 60 or over account for 18.7% of the population. In addition, the China National Committee on Ageing estimated the silver market is worth USD \$588 billion. The digital realm is catering to this demographic. For example, food delivery company Ele.me launched an elderly-friendly app in 2021, with larger icons and fonts to simplify the delivery process.

Additionally, before Singles' Day 2021, the world's largest shopping festival, Alibaba launched a 'senior mode' on its e-commerce platform

Taobao, which included voice-assisted technology and simplified navigation tools.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Virtual influencers

In China in 2022, we may see influencer marketing embrace virtual influencers, as opposed to traditional Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs). Virtual influencers are digitally-generated characters who exist purely online.

Gen Z, China's largest consumer group, are particularly drawn to these characters, which is due in part to the thriving anime, comics and gaming (ACG) industry.

Not only that, these influencers post relatable content about daily life that consumers enjoy. For example, when meta-human Ayayi first launched on RED in May 2021, her hashtag generated over

5.5 million views! She posts all sorts of content including mundane things, such as commuting on the Beijing underground, that are relatable to her followers. She's since worked with brands such as Bose, Fila and Sandro.

In an ever more regulated ecosystem and demand for influencers to have a squeaky-clean track record can virtual influencers be the ideal solution for brands looking to appeal to Chinese Gen Z consumers?

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

In China a combination of both always-on and campaigns is imperative. Chinese millennial consumers demand regular quality content and, from a cultural perspective, campaigns for shopping festivals throughout the year are significant as a main driver of sales.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

In China the entire social media architecture has been designed to function through paid media or KOL (Key Opinion Leaders) influencers to fuel the content. So creating great content alone, with no media spend, is often insufficient for brands to grow and engage effectively.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

If you're a brand new to China we always recommend that you understand your target audience first. From here you'll know how to tailor your content and choose which channels to best reach them. The key is to remember that Chinese consumers are now incredibly sophisticated – not only do their profiles change but the channels in which to reach them are innovating and evolving at an unbelievable pace.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

WULING Hong Guang MINI EV – The vehicle for everyone

Electric vehicle company WULING Hong Guang MINI EV initially defined the character of their product as a small EV car subject to less-strict traffic rules. They sought to re-positioned the vehicle as fashionable, convenient and cheap enough for everyone to own. Next they updated their appearance by collaborating with PANTONE

to attract a younger audience as their target customer. They encouraged customers to decorate their MINI EV and playfully treat them as Lifestyle Toys (潮玩). Celebrities helped amplify the message as engagement from customers grew from buzz around personalising their cars.

MINI EV managed to successfully adjust the brand perception entirely from a low-end product to a fashionable good value vehicle. According to the sales data Hong Guang MINI became the most popular vehicle in China for an entire year ranking them first in annual sales among sedans. Some reports show that as an electric car, Hong Guang MINI EV is even rated above Tesla's popularity.

INBRAX

**Lukas Hardy,
Social Media
Manager**
**Pancho
González,
Chief Creative
Officer**



INBRAX (CL)

Inbrax is an ad agency full creative services with digital marketing at heart.

”TikTok will continue to strengthen towards effective monetization for brands through trend-jacking, top ads and creative center, and live-streaming that will build an algorithm to transform the “product” into a trend.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

Definitely, TikTok will become the main player in the market and a key piece for all digital marketers in 2022. The platform will continue to strengthen towards effective monetization for brands through trend-jacking, top ads and creative center, and live-streaming that will build an algorithm to transform the “product” into a trend.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you’ve seen this year?

The latest statistic reveals that there are 3.78 billion social media users in the world, which is equivalent to 48% of the current world population. The most interesting is the Instagram Stories, which invite brands to the possibility of greater creative freedom and become a very helpful tool for the campaign to become a success with the audience.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022?

Influencer marketing is at its peak. 49% of consumers affirm that they depend on the recommendations of influencers in social networks to determine a purchase decision, this means that if consumers trust the recommendation of an influencer, they are more likely to buy the product. This statistic shows that in 2022 brands must continue to use influencers to achieve the success of their product.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Campaign – it's the only strategy that allows you to reach the goal without the intervention of external factors.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Paid – since it allows obtaining a 360 x-ray of the consumer's profile and thus enhancing the objective.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Content – the generation of valuable content is the key to impact new audiences and to meet the objective.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

The Mugler Spring Summer 2021, creatively amazing. The impact of the campaign will definitely empower brands in 2022 to strengthen inclusion and equity with regard to the selection of protagonists who represent their campaigns.

JAM SESSION

**Oana Oprea,
Head of Digital
Planning**



JAM SESSION (RO)

Jam Session Agency is a challenger agency with a progressive mix and remix of 3 core advertising competences – strategy, creative and project management – that collaborate to create relevant and lovable brands that penetrate culture today and tomorrow.

Jam Session Agency is Agency of the Year at Internetics 2021- and its core team is the team who brought home the first Gold Lion in Cannes and the first D&AD award for an independent agency in Romania.

“The winning mix in social media is represented by short video formats in combination with content creators. Hence it appears that in terms of influencer marketing, content creators are the stars of social platforms.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

One of the most interesting trends to watch is the growing level of influence that content creators have in the social environment. And I don't refer about "classic" influencers, celebrities, or public figures, but about digital-born creators who showcase their talents and find pleasure in creating relatable or unique content. And I

think that TikTok as a platform has accelerated this behavior and gave people a safe space to experiment. It has shown that anyone can use social media to share their skills, talents, and authenticity to build a community around them. The same dynamic and intimacy can so be seen on Facebook groups, since over a billion Facebook users are regularly engaged in these type of communities or on Twitch streams, since over 8.7 MILLION unique creators are streaming each month. The relationship that these content creators have with their communities is one that no brand could have, no matter how transparent or

authentic it may be on social media and that's why brands should find non-intrusive-ways to tap into these communities to listen and learn more about their customers. Approaching communities through content creators should be mandatory in 2022 social strategies for brands. But it's important to do it in a way that responds to the needs of these communities and that brings added value to them.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

From year to year, all the statistics shows that video is expanding more and more on socials, but now everything has accelerated. In the HubSpot report I saw that 85% of marketers rank short-form videos as the most effective type of social media content in 2021 and that 64% of marketers plan to invest more in short-form video in 2022. These statistics, together with the steps taken by social media platforms to prioritize video content, both by introducing new formats and by changes related to the algorithm, only shows that we already live in a video-first social world, and we should plan the content accordingly. Yes, long videos have their charm, but people don't necessarily expect that from brands. Short content series, in different formats, originals or adapted to trends manage to perform better and keep the audience engaged

and receptive. In this sense, I believe that Instagram Reels is a format which must be considered more by brands because it brings exposure and an element of novelty on the Instagram static feed.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022?

To sum up the answers to the last two questions, the winning mix in social media is represented by short video formats in combination with content creators. Hence it appears that in terms of influencer marketing, content creators are the stars of social platforms. To obtain engagement and any kind of interactivity with consumers they will play a key role, so brands will be more and more dependent on content creators. And this includes not only the use of influencers in campaigns, but also their integration on daily content, on live streams, in random Q&A series, reviews, takeovers and many other formats that

maintains a relationship with the community and introduces the brand in a natural way.

Being an influencer in 2022 is less taboo than a few years ago. This raises a new wave of influencers, but also brings a multitude of brands on them. Marketers that are aware of the value of digital creators should rethink their influencers strategies and plan long-term partnerships in order to build a meaningful relationship between influencer's communities and the brand.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

I think we should focus more on Always-on, in the need of building more unity and recognizability in social media and contributing to a consistent brand platform, easily adaptable depending on objectives and seasonality.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Of course, the ideal combination is a mix, but in the current conditions I think that a well-developed paid strategy is essential because it really influences the organic part.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Channels are always the main source of inspiration, because they come with different user behaviors, formats, tools, and trends that can incorporate any type of content.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

There are two campaigns I've worked on that I consider inspiring regarding social, because they have innovated in terms of the active involvement of content creators and the use of social media tools and formats.

The first campaign is "When cravings hit, Tazz delivers" for Tazz, a campaign for a Romanian food delivery service newly entered the market and eager to make a statement through bold content. That's how we got to a six-minute black and white film, an online content that challenged the communication pattern in the category. An atypical format in terms of length, mix of influencers and storytelling that portrayed Tazz as the go-to app for all the cravings. The cherry

on the cake was the fact that the actors were pop culture characters: a rock star, a chef, and a beloved duo from mainstream TV.

In addition to the viral content, we had in-app gamifications, in which people had the option to write what they're craving and receive a customized discount & content and to stir even more conversation on socials we went with activations very well adapted to each channel. On Facebook & Instagram we had three challenges with special mechanics: Guess the Cuisine; Forgotten cravings; Craving; Weird Mixes and on TikTok we had "Tell me you have a food crave without telling me you have a food crave" challenge, inspired by a popular TikTok trend. The

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TRENDS 2022

campaign is an example that shows once again how effective is the use of influencers as part of the content, and not just as amplifiers of it how the channel-specific engagement mechanics can create buzz and gather a loyal community around the campaign.

The second campaign is a CSR campaign for ING Bank Romania. Its purpose was to raise donations for forests' conservation in Făgăraș Mountains area, to protect animals' home and prevent bears from coming to the nearby villages for food. People had the option to donate directly through the donation feature from the mobile banking app or through an Instagram filter that promoted empathy for animals and

that transformed each use into a donation of 3 EUR from the brand to the NGO in charge of the cause.

But we didn't stop there. We entered the gaming community and challenged the biggest gamers in Romania to play their favorite games live in ... atypical conditions, which the animals also face due the illegal practices that disturb their playground. From "barbecue" smokes to tables with cut legs, which symbolized the illegal cutting of forests, the difficulty of the challenges increased depending on the number of donations. The mechanics and the campaign approach overall are also a great example of tapping into communities in a relevant way and are a proof of how online tools can enhance the idea.

JOE PUBLIC UNITED

**Megan Perks,
Executive
Creative
Director**



JOE PUBLIC UNITED (SA)

We are a 100% independent, proudly South African, integrated brand and communication group, whose philosophy is grounded in the belief that growth is a virtuous circle: we believe that the growth of our people is linked to the growth of our creative product, which impacts the growth of our clients, and which ultimately contributes to the growth of the country. In pursuit of our purpose, to be the fertile soil that serves the growth of our people, our clients and our country.

”What we can look to do in 2022 is “Always-there” [instead of Always-on] which places the user first and is about creating content that is relevant and well placed for the audience to naturally discover, this content becomes desired and sought out.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

As a creative director, the trend that excites me the most, but also challenges me the most is that consumers are expecting more of brands when it comes to creativity in social media in 2022. Marketers will need to work harder with their creative partners as consumers no longer want to see social ads but want to be served content that enriches the distinct experience each social platform has. In other words, we will have to double down on adding real value to their lives. Consumer research tells us that

consumers are looking for more from life in the post-pandemic world, so we need to strive beyond just capturing their attention and rather focus on true engagement. Together with this, we need to be aware that creative expression through social media is on the rise – so as a brand you are not only competing with your category competitors but with every content creator on social. While this can be overwhelming for marketers, my advice is to go back to basics: look to your brand’s purpose for direction; be authentic, don’t try to be a brand that you’re not; don’t try to be everything to everyone and most importantly, don’t get analysis paralysis – reports and metrics only mean something if you can draw insights, so in a world where everything you do can be measured, focus on

quality over quantity and ask yourself if you would engage with what your brand is putting out on social.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you’ve seen this year?

One of the most interesting metrics we observed this year was on a South African fast-food brand that we work with. We saw a view-through rate of 68% on a 90-second video across social media. What this means is that for the total views the video received, 68% of views watched 100% of the video. This was interesting because

this video went against what best practice tells us. So, why did this happen? When analyzing the work, we realised that the key was in the creative itself. We invested in filming something conceptually excellent, enjoyable, exciting, and entertaining for the target market – so when the content is creatively break-through, and it's served to the right audience at the right time in the right place – duration doesn't matter as much. Further to this, the brand also saw an increase in sales.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

One of the key areas we expect to see influencer marketing heading is to support social commerce, seeing more trends like #tiktokmademebuyit. Almost all the social platforms now feature social commerce features like native shops and online checkout, and we have even

seen TikTok continue to invest in seamless commerce features such as its partnership with Shopify. What's exciting about this for marketers is that influencers can become crucial drivers in converting awareness into online sales. What's interesting to note is that shoppers on social aren't just scrolling and clicking "buy now" on sponsored ads to shop. In reality, social media has become a consumer touchpoint for every stage of the purchase journey – across almost every product category.

What makes influencer content so powerful is that its more geared towards content discovery, giving the creators the potential of viral content and the ability to reach enormous audiences with their engaging, trending content. Another huge advantage is that most influencer content doesn't look like an ad, making it more powerful when engaging with and converting consumers.

Lastly, something to keep an eye on is community: real, rich, and impactful communities are

thriving across social media. Influencers and creators have built their businesses around cultivating relationships and communities on social platforms and in 2022, the key to building communities around your brand is to work with digital creators.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

One of our strategists proposed a theory recently that really resonated with me as a creative, she noted that “Always-on” is about putting the brand first and very much a push strategy that’s interruptive. What we can look to do in 2022 is “Always-there” which places the user first and is about creating content that is relevant and well placed for the audience to naturally discover, this content becomes desired and sought out. So my answer would be a combination.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

There is certainly a place for both, but without a strong paid strategy, social media marketing can lack impact. I would recommend spending time to understand your audience and objectives in detail. If you don’t have the budget to go paid, invest time in creating quality content marketing that drives value over time. On that same token, paid content still needs to be conceptually strong and create a brand experience for the user.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

They need to work collaboratively, but I always like to have creative led content, so the idea or the detail within the content (which needs to be strategically sound in terms of audience, relevance and objectives) comes first and informs the channels.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

Reddit's Superb Owl ad was one of the most innovative social media campaigns I saw this year – not because of bells and whistles, tactics, and trends but because of how simple and smart it was. The thought that a 5" spot could become the second most-searched ad on Google and third most-searched ad on Twitter

on the night of the Super Bowl is hard to wrap your mind around, but what makes this piece genius is that it leveraged its community, "One thing we learned from our communities last week is that underdogs can accomplish just about anything when we come together around a common area." Social listening and being tapped into the audience, zeitgeist, and a willingness to be brave are things I would like to see leading campaigns in 2022.

LAUNCH

**Amy Bottrill,
Social
Account
Director**



LAUNCH (UK)

We're Launch, one of the UK's leading independent creative brand comms agencies. Driven by creativity and exceptional talent, we cover the full range of through the line disciplines, from digital and content to experiential and media relations. What sets us apart? For us, it's providing our clients with long term, ownable 'creative territory', regardless of the channel. It's a skill we've honed over 20 years, across hundreds of brands and thousands of campaigns. And we call our process to get there Territory Define™.

”Goodbye ‘influencers’, hello ‘creators’. We’re tired of superficial influence and have turned to passionate and creative educators.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

After the past few years of brand-driven, advertising-driven and commerce-driven social media, the pandemic triggered a nostalgic shift back to what we all first logged on for in the days of blogs and MySpace: active and authentic communities. From the astronomic rise of Discord to the power of local Facebook and WhatsApp groups, these thriving communities offer a valuable opportunity for users to find their tribes, and for brands and marketeers to harness vocal aficionados as content creators – making

TikTok trainspotters and Fortnite streamers the new ‘influencers’.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you’ve seen this year?

TikTok has officially taken the crown as the world’s most downloaded social media app – eclipsing Facebook and Instagram. We’ve already seen Instagram try to replicate TikTok’s success with Reels, but the ByteDance app shows no signs of slowing down. The best way for brands to use TikTok is to lean into the algorithm’s fast-paced trends, get creative, and most importantly... have a laugh!

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Goodbye ‘influencers’, hello ‘creators’. We’re tired of superficial influence and have turned to passionate and creative educators. With the rise of paid subscription services such as Patreon and Substack, creators are finding new and inventive ways to monetise their content beyond brand partnerships. NFTs went mainstream in 2021, offering another innovative way for creators to take control and engage their fans, giving them a piece of them to ‘own’. In 2022, we also expect to see more creators extending this control to other business ventures and e-commerce, with more influencer-owned brands and product lines released to a captive audience. Brands have already started introducing creators from the ideation stage and even given them senior in-house roles (see Molly-Mae’s role as Creative Director at PrettyLittleThing): in 2022, we expect to see more creators getting bigger pieces of the business pie.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

With our technology continuing to shame us for our (admittedly shameful) screen time, we expect brands to be just as tuned in as we are. Trends can both catapult to a crescendo and vanish within a matter of hours, so social needs to always be 'on' and ready to react - there's no rest for the wicked

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

It's Mark Zuckerberg's Metaverse, and we're just living in it: pay-to-play will be the norm for the foreseeable future, in order to cut through noise, keep up with the competition and keep both business and brand thriving as social and commerce seamlessly integrate.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Great content is shareable content and transcends platforms: just take a look at the rise of meme accounts on Instagram, which largely lift relatable tweets and repackage them to serve on a different platform, against all the algorithm odds. How many of us finally downloaded TikTok in the UK in 2021 thanks to hearing a Scottish postman's sea shanties on the evening news?

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

Southgate, You're the One: 2021 cemented Gareth Southgate's status as a national treasure, when football almost came home. On social media, The Football Association produced relentlessly rich content for England across a plethora of channels to get the nation excited and encourage a new, progressive kind of patriotism that unapologetically takes the knee: putting inclusive, anti-racist principles at the forefront of the beautiful game. Tabloids and

politicians alike were directly challenged by England players both on- and off-line throughout the Euros, and tech platforms were also held to account to tackle hate speech. This was all supported with emotive pieces of film on England's official channels.

It wasn't all serious, though: we also got to see the fun side of England's youngest ever squad. There were weekly Twitch streams from the Lions' Den, the #ThreeLions taking on TikTok challenges and that iconic and downright joyful photoshoot of Saka on an inflatable unicorn. We can't wait to see what the 2022 World Cup brings.

LEONARDO 1452

**Gaby Arriaga,
Founder**



LEONARDO 1452 (MX)

Leonardo1452 is a consulting company specialized in consumer trends in Latin America and creator of the tool and book Near Future Thinking©. As trend hunters we look for tendencies that point to nascent market dynamics that have not yet come into companies' purview – markets in early stages of development. Leonardo1452 is an expert at detecting these emerging habits that can approach with the force of an ocean wave so that you can make effective business decisions about what to adjust to ensure your pre-eminence in years to come.

” With the emergence of Internet 3.0, brand actions will require increased visibility as social media will be the launchpad to bring audiences not only on board with, but inside the metaverse.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

Short formats that make serious topics fun

Short formats will continue to be the most consumed formats. Therefore, in 2022, we should expect to see an increase in creators of content that is usually formal and serious, such as medicine, finance or law. These new creators will embrace the short format in order to make their content entertaining, to the point and engaging for their audience. In addition, with the launch of YouTube Shorts, creators will have more and more options for short-form video.

Deep Fakes

Though deepfake is a technology and not a social media format, we will soon see it being used in campaigns that commemorate iconic characters. In Mexico, for example, on the traditional Day of the Dead, the brand Cerveza Victoria recreated three deceased national idols: Blue Demon, a wrestler; Cantinflas, a comedian; and Juan Gabriel, a popular singer and composer. In a live concert broadcast on different social platforms, Mexicans were able to see these artists sing and perform comedy again while interacting with their living counterparts.

Metaverse

Social media will be the vehicle through which users will come to understand the metaverse and also what they can do in it. With the emergence of Internet 3.0, brand actions will require increased visibility as social media will be the launchpad to bring audiences not only on board with, but inside the metaverse.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Although rumors suggest that Facebook is losing popularity, in Mexico, the network occupies the 5th place globally in terms of audience, and continues to grow. Brazil, Colombia and Argentina rank 4th, 14th and 16th, respectively.

As a network, LinkedIn is still struggling to gain a foothold in LATAM. However, it is already showing significant growth. Instagram is one of the networks with the highest levels of engagement in the region.

Mexico has a high level of Branded Content in Nutrition and Food, while Brazil has a high level of Branded Content in Sports.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

According to Comscore, posts by influencers accounted for 6.5% of total posts in Latin America. Brazil shows the greatest monthly average interaction with influencers, followed by Mexico. Colombia and Argentina are competing for 3rd place.

Despite such volume, I personally believe that users are becoming increasingly skeptical of content with a commercial approach. Gen Z, in particular, knows how to differentiate between paid and organic content. So, the task for influencers will become more challenging every day.

In Latin America, brands outperform influencers in terms of audience on Facebook, but in terms of content on Twitter, influencers are ahead.

Live Shopping has yet to take off in LATAM, but it is very likely that we will start to see creators investing in this content as a way to differentiate themselves and better empathize with their audiences.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

It's a mix of both. Always-on refers to our general branding content. We also design campaigns for products or services that are for sale and which generate an internal fixed cost.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Lately, organic. We've realized that achieving results on social media is becoming more and more expensive, especially on LinkedIn, which is where our audience is.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Content first. I believe we all, as users, deserve better content every day.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

Sofía – Puerto Rico

Saatchi & Saatchi Puerto Rico and the Down Syndrome Foundation created a campaign to raise awareness of the fact that there are more than eight million people in the world with Down Syndrome and only 11% manage to find a job. The protagonist was Sofia Jirau, a young woman with Down Syndrome who always dreamed of becoming a model and entrepreneur. The campaign created content on Instagram based on Sofia's likes and personality – at first, without making any mention of her Down Syndrome.

The campaign made more than 15 million impressions in earned media worldwide, and the Down Syndrome Foundation saw the single largest fundraising push in its history in a matter of hours.

Companies such as Pantene, Kellogg's, Walmart and others hired Sofia as an influencer. The young woman was also invited to participate as a model in the San Juan Fashion Week, the most important fashion event in Puerto Rico. On top of that, Sofia was given the opportunity to launch her own brand of products for women, called Alavett.

The grand culmination this year was Sofia's debut at New York Fashion Week as part of designer Marisa Santiago's show.

With this campaign, social media is used in the same way it has always been, without any advanced technology, without innovative formats, and without high production costs – this is the content that users appreciate. A user appreciates being part of a story and getting a surprise at the end that, in addition to putting a smile on their face, makes them question their values and ethics. To me, this is the content that the world needs.

MEDULLA COMMUNICATIONS

**Rajesh Mehta,
Chief
Strategy
Officer**



**Dhruv Gaur,
Consultant,
Digital Marketing**



MEDULLA COMMUNICATIONS (IN)

Medulla Communications is an India based healthcare communications agency, aiming to provide innovative, original and credible content and communication. We pride ourselves in being a one-stop shop for customized healthcare communications, including creative as well as scientific content development, required by pharmaceutical and FMCG healthcare clients.

“Social media channels are in a race to offer the best tools for influencers to earn more money and to companies to better analyze their influencer marketing ROI. This will bring a lift in terms of influencer marketing market expansion.”



THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

From being a connection medium for family and friends, social media is evolving in many new ways.

A new verse in the book

Face'book' with its recent addition of Meta'verse' is integrating its various social media and tech projects. For example one's digital identity will bridge one's Facebook profile and one's VR/metaverse presence.

AR / VR in healthcare

From product demos to VR being a diagnostic tool for diseases such as Alzheimer's, Traumatic brain injury these technologies are making a beneficial impact. Bayer – Pixacore partnership brought alive oncology content in a more immersive way. Increasing the audience engagement multifold.

Shoppers' paradise

Facebook & Instagram are leading the way with the discovery feature adds value to shopping. The ease & fun of shopping is likely to make it even more spontaneous (44% of Hong Kong shoppers indicated that social media is making them shop more spontaneously. Source: Facebook – Kantar Survey)

Instagram for Business

This is one of the new focus areas, where Instagram will be specifically engaging with creators to help them promote their businesses

Video, the game changer

Videos are likely to be leveraged even more, as the preferred method of content consumption. From the small videos phenomenon to Twitter & LinkedIn getting on the video content bandwagon and TikTok experimenting with eComerce, these trends are here to stay. Likewise for pharma industry, videos help deliver disease related content, training material etc. in an engaging way

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Social media – connecting the world

Kepios analysis shows that there are 4.55 billion social media users around the world in October 2021, equating to 57.6% of global population (October 2021)

On an average 13 new users are added every single second.

Facebook = India+China

With over 2.74 billion active monthly users, Facebook might soon overtake the population of India and China combined.

Increased dependence of social media for marketers

73% of marketers believe that their social media marketing efforts have been quite effective for their business – from being cost effective to increasing engagement, recall and loyalty.

- Instagram stories has gained popularity and is used by 500 million users
- More than 200 million Instagrammers visit at least one business profile every day
- Engagement with the brands on Instagram is 10x higher than Facebook
- 68% of YouTube users have watched a YouTube video to help make a purchase decision

- The number of small and medium sized businesses advertising on YouTube has 2x in the last 2 years

The momentum will continue in 2022 as businesses are under pressure and social media is a proven solution.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Influencer marketing – The Big moment is now

As brands are increasingly turning to social media platforms for their marketing, influencer recommendations drive purchase for the product.

Influencer Marketing and Social eCommerce will start blending thanks to new features that will help creators maximize their earning, opening new revenue streams and on the other hand, will support brands to sell even more items thanks to a frictionless purchase flow.

Influencer Marketing budgets will also increase thanks to the latest live-streaming shopping platforms that offer an easy way to buy anything during a specific time-window, from drop-collections to collectibles.

Social media channels are in a race to offer the best tools for influencers to earn more money and to companies to better analyze their influencer marketing ROI. This will bring, overall, a lift in terms of influencer marketing market expansion and interest from brands to continue shifting their marketing budget from traditional media to influencer marketing activations.

Influencers will start experimenting with NFTs, releasing collectibles, minting their most viral content. Companies will start collaborating with influencers to produce NFT collections.

From pharma and healthcare companies POV, influencers as KOLs will be leveraged even more.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Both campaign & always on are equally important. As 'Always on' provide a consistency and tone for the brand and campaigns give brand that push through specific objectives with respect to awareness, curiosity and engagement.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Both Paid & Organic are equally important. Organic allows the brand to set up its base and identify the target audiences based on the received engagement. On the other hand, paid promotions help you to reach those target audiences more effectively.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

'Content is King' – good curated content will lead to good engagement and virality for the brand. Depending on the brand/industry channels can be decided, and leveraging it across channels once the main content framework is created.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

Spotify's Wrapped campaign brought customer data to life. Spotify used many channels, including different types of social media ads, to celebrate their users and music in general. Music carries a certain nostalgia; Spotify used this to humanise its brand, bringing personal taste and self-expression to the fore.

This campaign involved:

1. Subscribers receiving their personalised listening data from the past year (most streamed artists, genres, songs, the amount of time spent listening to music, etc.)

2. Tongue-in-cheek, humorous billboards and social media posts that leveraged the yearly music trends and mock comical user playlists
3. This data-driven approach created a cohesive all-channel campaign that maximised visibility and leveraged user-generated content (UGC). They used data for advertising, which drove existing and new users back to their website and app to give them more data. Genius!

Users could also share their own data on social media directly from the Spotify app. This style of user-generated content also extended to artists sharing their success data over the year, talking to their huge social media following.

Following this spike in user-generated content, Wrapped's marketing appeal snowballed into the FOMO effect. Their social media feeds were filled with Spotify Wrapped statistics from their friends. Not only did this drive greater brand awareness, but it encouraged interest amongst non-users to download Spotify in hopes of being able to post similar experiences. Think of the conversion rates!

OSAKA LABS

**Shannon
Osborne,
Head of Digital**



OSAKA LABS (UK)

Osaka Labs is a Content Activation Studio built for future-thinking businesses. We focus on the digital aspects of brand, social and user behaviour to strengthen connections with consumers no matter where they spend their time on the internet.

”With the popularity of VR & TikTok on the rise, 2022 looks to bring alternative avenues to deliver not only value to the consumer but relatability & depth before becoming a loyal brand ambassador.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

2022 looks to bring a further push in the cultural shift towards incredibly reactive, personalised & organic media consumption.

Our daily lives are saturated with advertisements from brands who are trying to relay a message & capture consumer attention. On average a person can encounter between 6,000 to 10,000 ads every single day, so it's very easy for those messages to get lost or ignored.

During the 2021 pandemic we saw a rise in short video consumption, micro influencers & highly personalised news feeds all in a bid to feel more connected with one another.

With the popularity of VR & TikTok on the rise, 2022 looks to bring alternative avenues to deliver not only value to the consumer but relatability & depth before becoming a loyal brand ambassador.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Continuing on the theme of personalisation – the two above stats show the potential growth markets for hyper personal experiences for consumers & niche marketing.

“71% of consumers say they would shop more often if they used AR , yet 1% of retailers say they are using AR.” Being ahead of the game with developing AR experiences gives Marketers a cutting edge over the usual video & static imagery marketing. Instagram filters are one step in the direction of fully immersive experiences for consumers. Creating not only memorable

but useful AR applications to market products, not only captures data about your consumer, but brings users to the brand with an impressive introduction.

Another interesting stat : “With the pandemic, micro-influencers have seen engagement rates increase by an average of 130%, while Youtube channels are seeing an average growth spurt of 304% month on month.” Whilst micro influencers have always been around – people have to start somewhere – brands have usually focused their interests towards the big name content creators on the platform. Those who were ahead of the game on the TikTok platform have seen huge successes – for example the rise of Tiktok influencer Addison Rae. Everyday people are finding themselves able to gather a sizable following overnight. From this, brands can not only utilize smaller budgets whilst using micro influencers but can also capture audiences with the highest engagement rates in the influencer industry.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Becoming an influencer is a particularly saturated pursuit of 2021, everyone is able to pick up a camera & share their thoughts & recommendations to followers. However, not all can influence & retain large groups of people from solely plugging product promotion. Influencer marketing has already become a vital tool in the marketing matrix &

Already having touched on Micro Influencers, here are a few other directions I’d predict influencer marketing to be heading:

Increase trend with in-house brand creators or personalities: People know there is a marketer behind all the posts. Brands like Ryanair or Innocent have been breaking the barrier between the in-house creators & brands – coming across as more relatable & authentic showing the people behind the content.

Predictive models to continue scaling programs to provide more accurate campaign planning with influencers. Allowing brands to become more savvy in their partnerships & the solidity of influencers deals to become more reliable.

Streaming, reactive content & authenticity: A key content component in the influencers arsenal will most definitely be live streaming & interacting with followers quickly, often & not only for promotional purposes. Retaining large groups of people can become difficult when platforms are only used to plug brand deals.

Platform wars: The platform that can offer the most diverse set of tools to interact with followers & blending of Social Commerce to attract brand partnerships & influencer content creation.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

They work hand in hand with each other. In order to grow a brand voice, you need a boost of individual campaign promotions, but in order to retain those consumers you need an always on approach to stop those efforts going to waste with a loss in interest.

Reactive always on would be the perfect hybrid of new content with relatable up to date content.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Paid. The company's business goals will most likely be reflected in the strategy of paid campaigns. Whilst organic content is important, it works well to follow the direction & objectives of the paid campaign to work in unison.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Channel. First we'd decide the channel based on where the target audience spends most of their time. From here we can devise the best messaging & content creation to best grab their attention. Once we have the platforms we are able to fully understand the dimensions, abilities & scope of content.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

During the midst of the pandemic, digital platforms really came to the forefront to host communication & a means to stay in touch with friends and family. Dating app Bumble used this digital shift to help create new connections even in a time when people could not meet in real life. Their campaign Get Close, From Afar really highlighted the power of the internet whilst blending the day to day need for human interaction.

Leading with humorous but simple ad copy & imagery with captions such as “lock them down after lockdown”, “2020 had to do something crazy to bring you two together”.

This campaign utilized the huge shift to online dating & grew into the ranks of competitors such as Tinder with a 83% rise in app use.

Future campaigns can learn from this by implementing authentic & fast reacting content, relatable to the times & current trends. Providing positivity & hope but also speaking to the consumer in a way that is funny and memorable in a particularly sensitive and volatile year.

PIABO

**Lucas Florian,
Unit Director**



PIABO (DE)

PIABO is the leading full-service PR partner in the media landscape for the digital and innovation industry, headquartered in Berlin. For its forward-thinking clients like Shopify, Just Eat Takeaway or Stripe, PIABO achieves outstanding media presence. With its team of multidisciplinary advisors, PIABO offers services in public relations, strategic social media management as well as content marketing.

“I am quite confident that 2022 will see a shift from short-form video being a niché part of the communication strategy to becoming one of the chief commodities in the marketing mix.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

I find the shift from optics to action quite intriguing. For example: Much like in previous years, brands have added rainbow colours to their logos during LGBTQ month. But it feels as though many have begun to take more direct action as well. If companies begin supporting more and more initiatives and causes that relate to the values they care about, this would be a major shift for the communication industry.

I believe this approach of "putting your money where your mouth is" will have an increasing

importance in the communication mix of value-driven companies and organizations.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

1 billion on TikTok. Holy. Cow.

This has been a long time coming, but there is still so much untapped potential here, it's mind-boggling. I am quite confident that 2022 will see a shift from short-form video being a niche part of the communication strategy to becoming one of the chief commodities in the marketing mix.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

The entertainment industry and influencer marketing spheres are moving closer together. From "content lofts" to "influencer soaps", more and more professional formats are appearing, backed by production companies with TV industry background. The reason is the shift in media usage – daytime TV consumption is increasingly moving to the small screens. Not all new shows will necessarily produce new Kardashians of course – but I still believe we will see interesting new media personalities and formats, and brands will reap the benefit from being in the right place at the right time.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Both. If social media was a party, campaigns are the "tap-spoon-against-glass, followed-by-big-speech" moments. But you cannot do that all night long – at some point you want to hold a nice conversation in the kitchen as well, so people get to know you better. I believe this intimate always-on content is just as important as the campaign.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Paid. In B2B communication, paid is a given. In B2C, organic is fun while it lasts, but we have seen this before: In its heyday, Facebook allowed you to reach crazy amounts of people with organic postings, but as soon as marketers had shifted their resources to Facebook (and once FB was listed on the stock exchange), organic potential plummeted and media spend became necessary.

It would be naive to think this will change: Despite for example the endless-seeming organic buzz on TikTok right now, you will need a paid strategy to prevail there as well – so you might as well start early.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Content. The channels simply don't differ that much. If something unique does come up, someone else WILL clone it. Clubhouse Craze envelops the internet? Twitter launches "Spaces" audio rooms. If you have a good story, a good strategy, and good content, your audience will hear you.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

”Abolish 219a“ (”Streich 219a“) by Terre des Femmes Germany. Background: In Germany, doctors are not allowed to provide informations about abortions to the general public, due to the arcane paragraph §219a of the German criminal code.

The social media campaign launched in spring, and simply instructed users on how they could share information on abortion. This highlighted the absurdity that non-professionals can simply share abortion information, while doctors could face jail time for doing the same thing.

In winter, the new government’s coalition deal includes a plan to erase paragraph §219a. This is great news for the many activists and individuals who have called out this legislation over the years – and surely also a „mission accomplished“ moment for Terre des Femmes.

For me, this is a good example of community-driven activation with a cause.

RADARR

**Kei Obusan,
Senior Data
and Insights
Manager**



RADARR (SG)

Radarr is an award-winning social & digital data analytics and big data platform company that specializes in social listening, research and digital monitoring using AI and machine learning technologies

“The pandemic has strongly amplified the concept of digital interconnectedness in this borderless world. One interesting insight that we’re able to cull in our social listening research is that trends spread beyond country borders much faster now.”

THREE BIG ONES

What is the most interesting trend regarding social media that marketers should be aware of in 2022?

The pandemic has strongly amplified the concept of digital interconnectedness in this borderless world. One interesting insight that we're able to cull in our social listening research is that trends spread beyond country borders much faster now. One example of this phenomenon is when the brands collaborate with Asian idols/celebrities. Since they have fanbases in different countries, they are key drivers for brand/campaign talkability and awareness. This enables brands to explore new market opportunities, wider consumer base to reach and

streamline their campaigns across multiple countries.

What is the most interesting (social media) statistics you've seen this year?

Based on GWI data, more than 20% of working-age global internet users now listen to podcasts every week and there was a nearly 4% increase in Q2 2021 versus the last quarter. The pandemic impacted the media consumption of consumers where they try other modes of entertainment, thus, the growth of podcast listenership. Aside from casual listening, podcasts became a normal daily activity or routine to most working individuals to boost productivity.

Depending on their target audience, brands can include this platform when doing marketing orchestration plans to reach out to consumers when they are actively consuming informative content.

Where is influencer marketing headed in 2022? And why so?

Social media influencer marketing is becoming over saturated. It is now a challenge for brands and marketers to recalibrate their KOL marketing strategy from just tapping KOLs to really cultivate brand advocates, develop incentive programs to build long-term relationships with influencers, and vet KOLs that put out more authentic content. When we do social listening studies for our clients that have influencer marketing campaigns, we see that consumers typically engage well on KOLs that exude authenticity.

THREE QUICK ONES

Campaigns vs. Always-on

When planning the yearly social media activities, which is more important?

Always-on. Given that internet consumption skyrocketed as an aftermath of the global pandemic, consumers became more dependent on digital services and social media. This resulted in social media platforms recalibrating and improving their algorithms to serve content relevant to consumers.

Paid or Organic

When doing social media marketing, which of these you focus more on?

Brands should focus more on coming up with organic content because due to the recent changes in social platforms' algorithms, we now learn that suddenly, organic is no longer dead! Consumers engage with social media content that are authentic, relevant, and creative.

Content-first vs. Channel-first

When making social media plans, which of these two comes first?

Channel first. It is essential for brands to know where their target market is and follow their digital/social media footprints to develop holistic content plans based on each platform's usability.

THE CREATIVE ONE

What is the most creative, most innovative social media campaign you've seen this year?

The 2021 collaboration campaigns of luxury brands like Gucci x Balenciaga and Fendi x Versace. These kinds of collaborations pave the way to identify new target markets and release unique collections in terms of style and design. Campaign ideas like these would continue to challenge brands on how they are going to further expand their consumer base, to release more innovative services/products that will cater to unique identified markets.

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