

NOW//NEXT



2021 TRENDS:

In this edition, we're looking at how brands have adjusted to the constraints and uncertainties of COVID-19. While infections have been a consistent factor in every market, the extent of government lockdowns have varied widely. We're identifying how marketers have managed to activate their brands in a time of uncertainty, and the new trends that could shape innovation this year.

Almost all brand activation had to move online for much of 2020 but as vaccines begin to roll out. It's very hard to forecast what will be possible in summer 2021, being influenced by speed at which vaccines become available in different markets, and the development of virus mutations. Even when life becomes more normal, many consumers will still have concerns about mixing with others.

Lockdown has provoked us all to re-assess our lives and invest in our overall health and wellbeing. Our new lifestyles have created a once in a generation opportunity to experiment with new products, creating an opportunity for brands to innovate.

Finally, we cannot escape the economic impacts of Covid. Consumers will have less money, making them cost-conscious, more discerning about what they spend their money on, and driving them to seek inexpensive indulgences.

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1. An introduction to Huxly
2. Looking back to 2020
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MEET HUXLY

Huxly is a brand, innovation and communications development agency.

We are a unique team of strategists, designers and sensory scientists who use radically new approaches to build stronger, more successful brands. Being part of the MMR group gives us a global network of researchers and strategists, powerful digital tools and a data science capability. This allows us to understand strategic and cultural situations globally and develop inspiring creative solutions.

We believe that people are complex, but great brands are simple. For marketing to succeed we need to understand our customers' motivations and their emotional, functional, social and sensorial relationships with our products. This complex task takes place in a fast-changing world, as new trends and commercial alliances transform the landscape in which we work.

What we do.

BRAND POSITIONING

Understanding the needs and ambitions of your consumer, their sensory experience of your products, and your brand's role in society to create a compelling, consistent experience

INNOVATION

Mapping out new areas for your brand to expand into, generating stretching ideas, and building those into stronger and more meaningful innovations that consumers will love

COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Understanding consumer responses to early stage advertising ideas and refining them to create more compelling, relevant and credible copy

Get in touch joe@huxlyglobal.com

PLANNING FOR 2021

Opening Up

This document contains trends and activations that we've observed, and the implications for your brands.

In addition, we've recently completed a qual study with consumers in the US, UK and Australia to understand their hopes and fears as vaccines roll out and life begins to normalize.

If you'd like to join us for a free workshop, we'd be very happy to share the learnings and explore the implications for your brands.

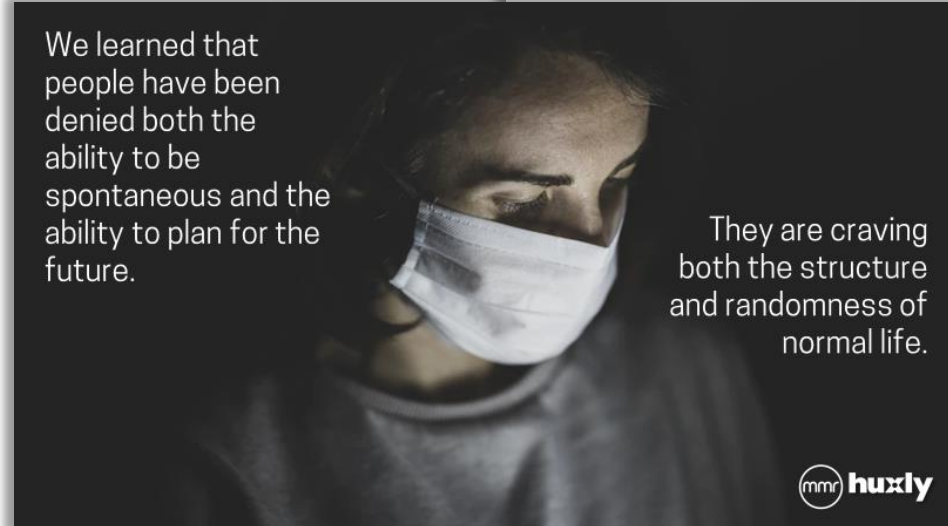
Get in touch!

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As vaccine distribution begins, marketers and innovators face an uncertain situation. Should we be planning for a return to normal in 2021? Or will the world be different after COVID-19? We spoke to consumers to find out what their priorities are, to guide your decision making.

150 **8 HOURS** 
OF VIDEO RESPONSES
US, UK, AUS 
RESPONDENTS HUMAN & AI INTERPRETATION





Events & Activation

Our favorite examples of brand activation in 2020, and our thoughts on how to approach 2021.

1

Events in 2020.

Events and Activation

Brands faced a range of challenges due to Covid-19 and reduced consumer mobility. These factors led to the cancellations of festivals, pop-ups and immersive experiences.

Online events have been in a period of rapid growth with brands moving further into online spaces (fuelled by Covid-19) with consumers seeking new ways to enjoy their social time.

McDonald's hosted a virtual music event which was streamed through their app and featured a list of well-known artists including Stormzy, Lewis Capaldi and Kaiser Chiefs.

There has also been an eclectic range of masterclasses streamed online; from Anna Wintour teaching Creativity and Leadership, to Dan Brown's Thriller Writing Workshop to Alice Waters on the Art of Home Cooking.

Although many of us have been stuck at home, 2020 for many has been a year of new online experiences.

As expectations of online content increase, brands will have new opportunities to curate and sponsor engaging content.



Source: <https://www.mcdonalds.com/gb/en-gb/latest/im-lovin-it-live.html>

2

Brand Activation in 2020.

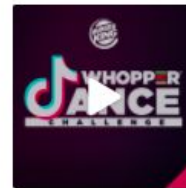
In 2020 brand activation was taken online, offering consumers new ways in which to engage with their favorite brands:

- 1) Malibu created a 'holiday at home' campaign which asked consumers and the 'insta-famous' to tag @maliburumuk with the #MalibuHoliday hashtag in their photos. Participants were automatically entered for the chance to win an at-home care pack filled with various Malibu products
- 2) Starbucks also moved in online, with a filter that matched consumers with different drinks, giving them fun #inspo for their next caffeine fix
- 3) Burger King created the #whopperchallenge on TikTok. Those who took part received a tasty DM with a code for money off their next purchase

Online has given brands the ability to interact and have fun with their consumers, something that's likely to continue throughout 2021.

Sources: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/malibu-holiday-at-home-campaign>

<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/face-filters-on-instagram> <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/whopper-dance>



Whopper Dance

Burger King

291 videos

"During these uncertain times, consumers are looking to learn new skills and are seeking moments of joy within their homes" - Raja Banerji



3

Events in 2021.

Events and Activation

Looking ahead to summer 2021, it's possible that a degree of normality may have returned by mid-2021.

As we move into 'events season', music festivals such as Reading & Leeds and Primavera Sound in Barcelona are set to reopen their gates. It's not yet clear how these events will be run, but websites are comforting consumers with the promise of implementing new safety measures to ensure they run safely and smoothly.

Glastonbury, Coachella and Burning Man, have had to cancel for the second year running due to the pandemic, and it is likely that many more events will still not have the necessary tools to open safely.

Although parts of the event industry are expected to open up, there will be a more permanent shift towards increased online presence, where bands can feel more secure in a time of ever-changing restrictions.

COACHELLA



4

Brand Activation in 2021.

Events and Activation

By mid 2021, with the help of the Covid-19 vaccine, it's anticipated that globally we will be some steps towards normality. We expect a combination of online and offline activation.

Brand activation in city centres, shopping centres, supermarkets and outdoor events will likely be more common as consumers get back to work, events and socializing with family and friends.

Brands will need to implement new safety measures to remove consumer tensions around hygiene, allowing them to carefully engage their consumers and make them feel safe.

Selfridges introduced its annual pop-up in the form of Fendi Caffe last December. They adhered to local Covid regulations and it was a huge success; it's likely there will be more of this to come.

Online campaigns will continue to push on in 2021 through social media channels, allowing brands to target their consumers from the comfort of their own homes.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/the-fendi-caffe>



Four 2021 food & beverage trends.

COVID-19 has accelerated a range of longstanding trends, giving them new focus as our lifestyles changed.



In-Home Experiences

In-home experiences and delivery services have become an important part of our lives this year. Moving into 2021 it is likely that these behaviors will recede slightly, but we expect the trend to persist.



Sustainability

The food and drink category is continuing to move into a more environmentally conscious space.
It is important that brands deliver against this important consumer need.



Health & Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing is an ever-growing trend.
Consumers have renewed focus on the importance of food and beverages that enhance their wellbeing.



More For Less

Moving into 2021 some consumers are going to have to balance the desire for moments of luxury on a constrained budget.



In Home Experiences

This year online experiences and home grocery delivery has been in a period of rapid growth, and is set to become a more permanent part of our lives.

1

Bacardi Twisttails.

In Home Experiences...

What is it?

Bacardi recently launched 'Twisttails', a range of bar-quality cocktails that can be easily made as an at-home pick me up.

Why does it matter?

There is still uncertainty about the lasting implications of the pandemic on the hospitality industry. With the future uncertain, there is likely to be a rise in at-home bar quality brands to replace evenings out at bars and clubs.



"With more and more people seeking convenience and home entertainment solutions... we wanted to provide a solution that will show people you don't need an elaborate set-up or countless ingredients to produce bar-quality cocktails at home - it can be as easy as a twist and a shake."

- Ankush Manchanda, Digital and eCommerce Director Bacardi

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/bacardi-twisttails>

2

Rosa's Thai Café.

What is it?

With restaurants in London, Liverpool, Leeds and Manchester, Rosa's Thai Cafe is a well known eat out spot.

Now they are offering direct-to-consumer DIY kits, allowing you to make and eat your favorite dishes at home.

ROSA'S
THAI CAFE



Why does it matter?

There is consumer desire to eat restaurant quality food at home and without the hassle of sourcing and measuring ingredients.

After a surge of baking at the start of 2020, this is a fun alternative for those who enjoy being creative in the kitchen and want to cook tasty meals with minimal faff.

Sources: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joanneshurvell/2020/11/19/11-popular-london-restaurants-offer-best-dishes-and-kits-for-home-delivery/?sh=6d66367758e0>

<https://www.rosasthaicafe.com/>

3

Pan-n-Ice.

In Home Experiences...

What is it?

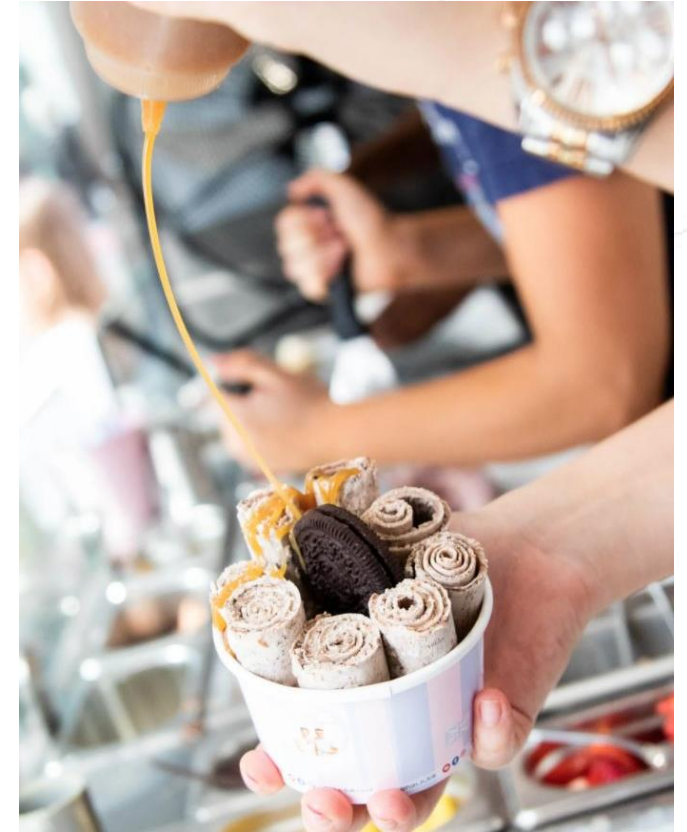
Meet Pan-n-ice. A unique ice cream roll company, personalizing ice cream to each consumer.

Usually found at private parties, events or in big shopping centres, 2020 moved the brand in-home.

Why does it matter?

Obviously we've all been unable to go out all that much recently. So there's masses of pent up desire for fun in-home activities that the whole family can immerse themselves in.

This kit allows individual personalization; a fun and engaging alternative to single flavor tubs and particularly significant in this category.



ULTIMATE PACK	BUBBA PACK	STARTER PACK			
View Details	Add to Cart	View Details	Add to Cart	View Details	Add to Cart

Source: <https://pan-n-ice.co.uk/>



Sustainability

With increasing consumer knowledge on the importance of shopping sustainably, brands must continue to move into this territory.

1 Absolut.

Sustainability

What is it?

The Absolut Company has tapped in to consumer desires for more sustainable living, introducing recycled and recyclable paper bottles to the UK and Sweden as a trial for a new packaging prototype.



Why does this matter?

Consumers are increasingly aware of the impact that unsustainable packaging has on the environment. Put simply, shifting to a more sustainable alternative generally just makes people feel like they're doing something good, while also addressing the need for brands to use more mindful materials.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/paper-bottle-absolut>

2

SodaStream Reverse Vending Machine.

Sustainability

What is it?

SodaStream has created a reverse vending machine in partnership with Tomra. It will make it easier for people to exchange and recycle used canisters.

Why does it matter?

Being able to make sustainable choices easily is increasingly important for consumers. SodaStream and Tomras' reverse vending machine gives consumers a simple way to recycle old bottles.



huxly

"We hope the Tomra reverse vending solution will bring smoother logistics for both SodaStream retailers and customers, and make it even easier for streamers to exchange their cylinders and do their part for the environment. We take pride in partnering with an industry leader that shares our vision to make the beverage space more sustainable."

- Eyal Shohat, CEO SodaStream

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/reverse-vending-machine>

3

EQUO Straws.

Sustainability

What is it?

EQUO Straws are made from sugarcane, grass, coconut and rice and provide a sustainable alternative to plastic straws.



Why does it matter?

From October 2020, by law businesses in the UK were no longer able to offer customers plastic straws.

These straws offer a more robust solution to soggy paper alternatives and are fully compostable and biodegradable, making them environmentally friendly.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/equo-straws>



4 Plant-based Milk Appliances.

Sustainability

What is it?

Chefwave has created an appliance that allows consumers to make their own plant-based milk at home. The unit has six programs that enables users to create cashew, soy, oat, coconut or macadamia milk in just 20 minutes.

Why does it matter?

An ever-increasing number of consumers are moving towards a more sustainable way of living, cutting out animal products and finding ways to reduce excessive packaging.



Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/chefwave-milkmade>

5

Mars Vegan Chocolate Bars.

Sustainability

What is it?

Mars have launched two new vegan chocolate bars, Topic and Bounty, following the huge success of the vegan Galaxy bar in 2019.

"We are so pleased to be offering more consumers the opportunity to try our brands. Galaxy Vegan has proved incredibly popular, and we believe that Topic Vegan and Bounty Vegan will add something excitingly different to the free-from category."

Why does it matter?

Sustainable, plant-based diets are becoming increasingly popular with more and more consumers.

Products such as Mars' vegan chocolate bars allow people to switch out old favorites, whether as a permanent alternative or a small change to their everyday diet.



Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/vegan-candy-bars>



Health & Wellbeing

A forced change in lifestyle has given us time and incentives to focus on our health and wellbeing.

1

Big Easy Tepache.

What is it?

Big Easy Tepache probiotic drinks are a new range of refreshments; tropical flavors with added functional benefits such as prebiotics, probiotics, low calorie and low sugar.

Health and Wellbeing...



Why does it matter?

The health and wellbeing space is continuing to gain traction with increasing consumer awareness about the benefits of probiotics, low sugars and low calories on overall health.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/big-easy-bucha>



2

Loop Kefir Water.

What is it?

LOOP Kefir water is a gut-friendly drink in a range of unique flavors.

They use infused water (which is usually rejected in the making of essential oils) with otherwise wasted 'ugly' fruit and veg produce, creating flavorful cold-pressed juices.

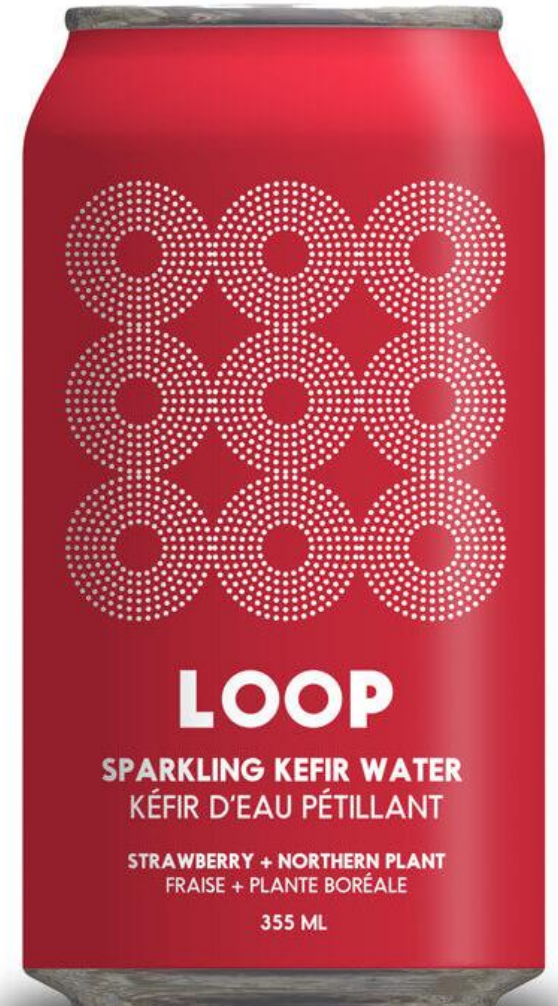
Health and Wellbeing...



Why does it matter?

With increasing knowledge and interest surrounding gut health, LOOP has recognized a consumer need and used 'probiotics' to provide gut-friendly, non-dairy drink options.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/loop-water-kefir>



3

SOL DUC Hard Seltzer.

Health and Wellbeing...

What is it?

Sol Duc has produced a low-calorie, low ABV seltzer which offers premium flavor combinations and a sophisticated aesthetic.

Why does it matter?

There is an emerging middle ground for the drinks sector, with increasing numbers of consumers who want to drink in moderation, especially when in social contexts.

SOL DUC Hard Seltzer offers consumers a 'grown-up' beverage that's sophisticated and refreshing without a high ABV.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/sol-duc-hard-seltzers>



4

Project Juice.

What is it?

Project Juice specializes in hand-crafted, cold pressed juice products that can be personalized to address a variety of everyday concerns: energy, focus, immunity, detoxification, protein deficiency and more.



Why does it matter?

Anything that can optimize consumers' health and wellbeing is a huge pro at the moment.

Since the start of COVID-19, consumers are more aware of the impact of food and beverages on their total health; Project Juice allows consumers target specific tensions or deficiencies in their current diet.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/project-juice-1>





More For Less

Economic uncertainty is likely to continue for some time. While consumers will be trying to spend less, occasional premium indulgences at home will be popular.

1 Diageo Premixed Cocktails.

What is it?

Diageo has released two varieties of premixed cocktails: Smirnoff Passionfruit Martini and Gordon's Pink Martini. Priced at £2 in the UK, these offer a premium drink experience at a reasonable price point.

Why does it matter?

The economy has been hit hard by the pandemic, products like this allow consumers to experience a little taste of luxury at home, for less.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/premix-cocktails>



2

Pret A Manger Retail Coffee Range.

What is it?

Pret a Manger launched a retail coffee range in the UK – allowing consumers to enjoy their favorite caffeine fix at home, while they can't pick one up on their usual morning commute.

"Throughout this year, our customers have made it clear just how much they love and miss our organic coffee. This new partnership with Waitrose means more of our customers will be able to play the role of Pret barista and brew their own at home"

- Claire Cough, Pret a Manger MD

Why does it matter?

Consumer habits and norms have changed a lot throughout the course of the past year. Working from home and less frequent outings has meant consumers are no longer grabbing-to-go.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/retail-coffee-range>



3

EPIC Brownie Kit.

What is it?

Duncan Hines' EPIC Baking Kits help you craft Instagramable cakes, cookies and brownies at home. The kits include all the toppings & ingredients you need to create your own over-the-top treats.



Why does it matter?

Baking has been at the core of family life for the last year, with consumers generally spending more time in the kitchen. EPIC kits give consumers an opportunity to make something new, exciting and Instagramable and gives consumers the confidence to try something new.

Source: <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/epic-baking-kits>



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