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July 2021

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INDUSTRY HAS GROWN**



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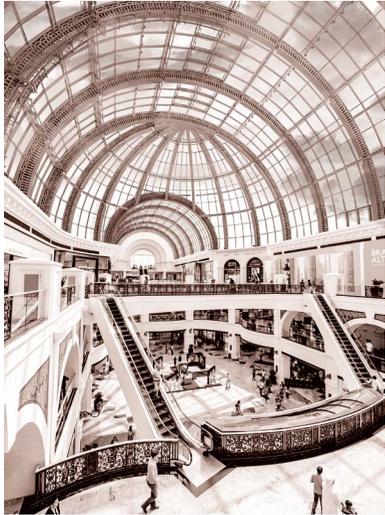
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Shruthi Nair
Executive Editor

Retail to the rescue of media

As the editor of a retail magazine, the recent developments occurring in the media space have been super exciting for me, to say the least. By recent developments, I mean, Netflix announcing its own e-commerce platform to sell merchandise of its original shows, Snapchat acquiring Fit Analytics, which specializes in apparel and footwear technology, and Facebook launching 'shop' and 'marketplace' with increased investment in technologies that facilitate convenient shopping experiences on its platform directly.

Many content platforms have been taking pride in saying "we are ad-free" and being authentic and non-promotional in their approach. However, they have had to find new ways of generating revenue. While some have relied on subscription models, others have been cheeky in getting brands to endorse within the content, by means of product placements and brand integration. Even mainstream media companies and publishers in the region are moving to the paywall/subscription model to diversify their revenue streams.

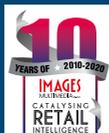
On the other hand, retailers are realizing that engagement is key and to target its customers effectively, they need to start focusing on not just products and experiences but also content that resonates with consumers. Shoppable content, which is any kind of digital content from which users can jump directly to a retailer's product page with an immediate purchase option or add a product directly to their shopping cart is also taking the e-commerce world by storm.

Lines between media and retail are blurring; bridges between entertainment and e-commerce are being created and I am all in for it. The collaborations between media companies and retail conglomerates can result in revolutionizing the way overall consumption (of both content and products complimentary) takes place. The first-responders and the ones who capitalise on synergies well by partnering with the right players will pave way for the next evolution. The devil is in the detail, but the answer is in retail!!

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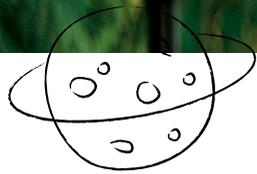
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THE FUTURE IS WHAT WE MAKE IT

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BACK TO SCHOOL 2021

Team up with your customers' squad

Words by Farimah Moeini, Snapchat Head of Industry - Retail and Travel



Source: shutterstock.com

The region is in the midst of a shopping revolution. The pandemic has accelerated the e-commerce transition, and this year's back-to-school shopping will embrace this new norm.

The online shopping boom has irrevocably changed consumer behaviour. Traditional shopping habits have been supplemented, if not replaced by augmented reality (AR), communication platforms, and peer recommendations. Retailers looking to stand out in this year's back to school season need to harness these new ways of communicating, become a part of the new generation shoppers' squad, and embrace new consumer engagement behaviours to ultimately drive conversions.



THE BEAUTY-TECH BOOM

It lies in the lens of the beholder

Story: Shruthi Nair





Masks and make-up don't really go hand-in-hand right? Despite that, the Middle East and Africa's beauty and personal care industry is forecast to grow from \$32 billion as of 2020 to \$39 billion by 2025. What is going to fuel the growth of beauty industry and what elements are going to ensure the immediate recovery of the market?



Source: shutterstock.com

THE SLOW FUTURE OF FAST FASHION!

Story: Shruthi Nair

The fashion industry will need to ‘slow down’ so that people can ‘enjoy it much more’ without always looking for the next new thing,” said Anna Wintour, Editor-in-Chief of Vogue.



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PEOPLE, PURPOSE, AND PROFIT (OR LOSS)

Story: *Jibran Chouguley*

The recent debacle after football star Cristiano Ronaldo chucked a bottle of Coca-Cola aside during a pre-match press conference for the UEFA tournament sparked debates on a range of issues including health, morality, product placement, advertisement, and endorsements, especially after the move cost the company \$4billion in market cap. Admittedly, Ronaldo's act alone wasn't responsible for the share price plunge, but it definitely was one of the reasons.

Today, audiences, consumers, and customers all care about the value and purpose associated with both people and brands. According to a Kantar study, 68% of US consumers expect brands to be clear about their values, while Millennials and Generation Z have the highest expectations of all age groups. As Simon Sinek once said, "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it." Finding the purpose and value of a brand is paramount today for customer loyalty and the younger consumers only seem to stick with brands that align with their ideologies and value.

As a response to that, many brands have been taking a stand on social issues, making political commentary, and after decades of staying neutral, they are now taking sides. Some of these campaigns have resulted in incredible outcomes including better brand awareness, increased loyalty and even surges in revenue. However, many other campaigns, especially the ones approached distastefully, have backfired. Here's a look at some of the boldest campaigns from the last few years that made waves – both positive and negative.



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