



Shared experiences



“I’m seeking experiences I can share with others, to enrich my daily life and escape life’s pressures”



Enjoyable and novel experiences continue to form moments of escapism in consumers' lives and these experiences are increasingly geared towards sharing.

The recession reminded people to value the simple pleasures of life – to find enjoyment in spending quality time with family and friends, and from other activities that don't require spending too much money.

Interest in small pleasures continues, but a desire for more intense and meaningful experiences and new sensations is emerging, driven by a more positive economic outlook and a sense of status increasingly derived from spending on experiences rather than possessions.

Online social networks continue to play an ever-more significant role in this area, as individuals' digital identities become more and more central to their sense of self. Increasingly an experience isn't meaningful until it is shared – the meaning is in the sharing. Brands that facilitate sharing in innovative ways will gain traction and engagement.



Key takeaways



Consumers are once again hungry for, and feel able to spend on, exhilarating and unusual experiences which enrich their everyday lives, and provide an antidote to the pressures of modern living.



Now the experience itself is only half of the story. Sharing the good times with your social network is becoming a more fundamental part of the experience itself.



Brands that not only excite and entertain consumers with rich and rewarding experiences, but also facilitate sharing in innovative new ways, will win deep engagement with today's connected consumers.



Overview of the sub-trends



Fun and play

Enjoyment through play and novelty

Immersive experiences

Seeking experiences that enrich and transport

Passion and purpose

Experiences that introduce meaning and purpose to life

Richer rewards

Indulgent experiences that offer respite and reward

New sensations

Desire to experiment with new and novel products

Home-style comfort

Seeking the comfort and nostalgia of home



Fun and play

This sub-trend grows in significance as consumers look for ways to incorporate light relief into their daily lives, embracing experiences and brands that provide accessible moments of fun and facilitate playfulness





From

Appreciation of brands that incorporate a playful dimension into products, packaging or communications



Dairylea 'Lunchables' stack'em snack boxes offers UK kids the novelty of building their own snack.

To

Increased interest in brands and experiences that put playfulness front and centre



Let's Café in Taiwan allows customers to print edible pictures of themselves on cakes and cups of coffee!



In-market examples from around the world



What: During the 2015 Superbowl broadcast on 1 February, brands dominated Twitter with playful commentary and brand-on-brand jokes.

Why: Social media is enabling brands to show their human side and use humour and wit to forge more personal relationships with consumers.



What: Biscuit maker McVities has created a cuddle café in central London. The café was designed with 'wall-to-wall cuteness', with free drinks and treats offered in return for cuddles.

Why: This café aims to maximise visitors' happiness levels, following research about the emotional and health benefits of a cuddle. Plus, associations with free perks and quirkiness builds greater brand equity.



What: Dominos host a comedy vine series on their website, inviting UK viewers to follow two average pizza-loving guys 'Huw' and 'Leslie' in their thwarted attempts to eat pizza.

Why: Over the last five years Domino's has embraced all things digital to drive its marketing activity, putting humour and frivolity at the heart of its digital communications.



New sensations

Consumers are no longer just looking for enhanced sensorial experiences, they desire completely new sensory journeys. Having a customer base that is increasingly culturally open and willing to experiment, gives brands license to cross new frontiers when it comes to flavour, scent, format and experience.





From

Products that give enhanced sensory experience on multiple fronts



'Aroma' scented lids in Shanghai, which are designed to enhance the flavour and experience of drinking the coffee.

To

Products that facilitate new sensory journeys

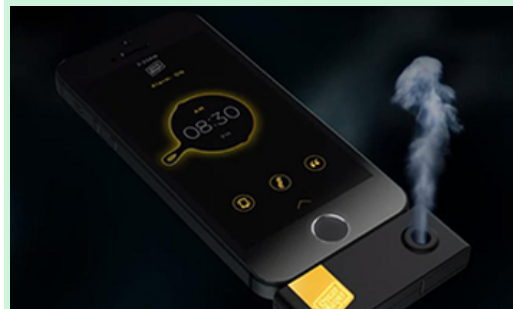


British company Bombas and Parr created bespoke bowls and boxes for each of Heinz beans' limited edition flavours, along with a musical spoon that plays a specific song.



What: In Japan there is a new 'choi-tashi' trend of adding unusual ingredients to transform taste and texture – Japanese KFC has started offering side options like wasabi soy, yoghurt, marmalade and even vanilla ice cream.

Why: As people look for more unexpected sensations, more and more brands are introducing interesting and surprising new textures and flavours to existing products.



What: The Oscar Mayer Company in the US has created an alarm clock add-on for the iPhone, which releases a bacon 'noises' and smells!

Why: *Wake up and smell the bacon* promises to be a success as more and more products are marketed in multisensory ways, from packaging to in-store activation – with a high novelty factor being the main draw.



What: DNA is the world's only alcoholic spring water, combining sparkling spring water, natural fruit flavour and alcohol.

Why: To the taste, there's not a trace of alcohol but beware: the alcoholic content is five percent. As DNA expands across US, Japan and UK clubs, bars, restaurants and major grocery stores, consumers are responding well to this unusual sensation.



Immersive experiences

People are seeking to participate in deep, immersive experiences that take them away from the reality of their daily lives and enrich their experience of the world around them. Experiences that deliver a sense of theatre and thrill will be truly worthy of sharing.





From

Focus on the hidden treasures of day-to-day life



Urban Green Space in the UK are dedicated to creating mini moments of relaxation and connections with nature for city workers, in small landscaped gardens across cities.

To

Growing desire for moments of escape from the every day, together with total immersion in the 'other'



With a mission of 'adding depth to drinking', Clarens Craft Beer Festival in Johannesburg offers attendees a weekend away from the city, learning about each beer they drink.



In-market examples from around the world



What: Sublimotion in Ibiza is a “360 degree sensual-gastronomic experience,” according to the Spanish food press. As ‘participants’ work through the menu, the space around them changes with every course.

Why: Sublimotion offers another dimension to food, transporting customers to different places, each with its own ambience.



What: Austrian-owned Zotter Chocolate Theatre in Shanghai is a factory offering an immersion into the world of cocoa and chocolate making.

Why: Fused with a European atmosphere you wouldn’t find elsewhere in Shanghai, educational demonstrations become a form of culinary theatre here.



What: Red Bull Station is a major new cultural venue in a gentrified part of São Paulo. It aims to foster the creation of art and music, involving visitors in the process by allowing them to observe the workings of the resident artists and musicians.

Why: This answers a growing demand for people to not only witness the finished product but actually be deeply involved in the artistic process.



Home-style comfort

As a contrast to fast-moving and technology-dominated lifestyles, people increasingly seek out low-key and stripped-back environments and experiences that offer the comfort and familiarity of home.





From

'Fast casual' and informal experiences which fit around busy routines



'Doris and Sonny's' is a restaurant in Miami serving all the classic American home-cooked dishes at a fast-food pace.

To

Much slower, informal occasions – day or night - in surroundings reminiscent of home



'Food Jams' in Cape Town supplies a professional chef to cook for your private gatherings at home (often involving customers in the process).



In-market examples from around the world



What: La Madre de Miren is an independent Madrid-based honey and preserves company. The owner, with her mother's trusted recipes for jams and spreads, offers consumers a 'little taste of home', as well as the opportunity to customise flavours and the printed label.

Why: This nostalgic and personalised product experience offers a counterpoint to mass produced spreads.



What: Japanese writer Yu Nakamura has created You Box, filled with recipe ideas and all the necessary ingredients to create them.

Why: It sounds like a typical food box scheme, but the difference is that Yu has scoured Japan for rare ingredients and knowledgeable grandmothers in order to share and teach the art of traditional Japanese home cooking, taking Japanese city-dwellers right back to their roots.



What: Nan Xiao Guo is the casual version of a very famous Shanghai-style restaurant in China - Xiao Nan Guo.

Why: Nan Xiao Guo is an informal, very cosy restaurant that offers home-style dishes accompanied with abundant cups of green tea. It is an increasingly popular concept in Shanghai, where dining out is seen by many as a highly formal occasion.



Richer rewards

Consumers are even more likely to indulge in luxuries during more financially secure times, seeking moments of respite and reward; 'Richer Rewards' is a scaling up of its predecessor.





From

Seeking small but indulgent experiences that can ideally be physically shared with others



British chains Millie's and Ben's cookies took off simultaneously in 2012/13, due to unprecedented success in shopping centres.

To

A desire for more exciting everyday treats and rewards – shared online with friends and followers



Premium Ted Baker limited edition macarons by UK company Ganache-Macaron caused a stir on Pinterest and Instagram.



In-market examples from around the world



What: QOD, a well known Brazilian brand of cosmetics and hair style products, recently opened a premium barber shop to promote its new line of products for men.

Why: The bar is designed to convey a sense of comfort and tradition, with customers offered a selection of cigars, special whiskeys and craft beers.



What: A growing number of Indians aged between 25 and 40, are taking a fancy to top-of-the-line premium bicycles Firefox and Giant for commuting, recreation and exercise.

Why: For many driven young entrepreneurs from Bangalore travelling by a sleek two-wheeler is a symbol of status as well as healthy lifestyle choice.



What: Modern clan travel site Go 2 Africa offers tours of the highlands of South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe, with luxury camping thrown in.

Why: Fusing traditional safari with mobile luxury offers customers the ultimate experience of nature and 5* accommodation combined.



Passion and purpose

As the economic outlook improves, the desire to pursue interests and passions that excite the individual consumer deepens. Greater investments are being made in products that facilitate self-improvement, and help consumers achieve their personal goals.





From

Aspiring to self-improvement through fun and fulfilling moments



The Mobile Yogi in Sydney offers customers inexpensive classes in various locations around the city.

To

Having the time and resources to develop skills and pursue passions that benefit both self and others



Teaching Liverpool to Cook initiative involves foodies and experts training 3000 disadvantaged people across Liverpool – educating them on cookery skills, budgeting and food waste prevention.



In-market examples from around the world



What: UK publisher Wild Things produces books that inspire and guide people on personal adventures centred around fitness pursuits.

Why: Aimed at busy city-dwellers, sales of the Wild Things took off in 2014 as people embrace the opportunity to expand their personal horizons – which are becoming increasingly adventurous.



What: Barcelona has become the craft capital of Europe. Its now annual Handmade Festival offers master classes, workshops, tasting sessions, exhibitions and concerts.

Why: This Handmade Festival captures the European trend for self-reliance and return to artisanal skills for both professionals and aficionados alike.



What: The Italian islands of San Domino and San Nicola have been taken over by spirits company Bacardi and transformed into an early 20th Century, Cuban-themed resort—Isola Bacardi with parties, daily sports and wellbeing activities running all day.

Why: Bacardi's campaign capitalises on consumers' desire for quality time, a sense of shared purpose and community, without being affronted by brazen advertising from a big company.



Trend summary



Trend summary





Relevance in Ireland

...photo-sharing mobile platform Instagram is growing more quickly than Twitter in user numbers, and 23% of those users photograph and share their food as part of a photoblog/culinary diary. #food is one of the most popular hashtags of the Irish Instagram world.

A more positive financial outlook increases consumer likelihood to pay a premium for moments of fun and experimental sensations, and on a more regular basis.

Relevance in GB

...consumers lack headspace, and rank energy as the most valuable human resource (above money, time, space and information). Enjoyable experiences that transport a consumer away from their busy schedule and reenergise them are therefore increasingly sought after.

They are also more likely to treat themselves to little luxuries and trips out; 47 million more visits were made to fast casual dining chains in 2014 than in 2011 in the UK.



How dynamic are the sub-trends?



Heating up
Still warm
Cooling



Immersive experiences

Seeking experiences that enrich and transport

Home style comfort

Seeking the comfort and nostalgia of home

Heating up
Still warm
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Passion and purpose

Experiences that introduce meaning and purpose to life

Fun and play

Enjoyment through play and novelty

New sensations

Desire to experiment with new and novel products



...Offer consumers more than just a taste experience? Could your product transport a consumer away from the everyday for a moment?



...Incorporate novelty and a playful twist into a product, to engage and surprise a consumer?



...leverage the heritage or the more indulgent aspects of a product to evoke a sense of nostalgia and comfort?

Thank you



For more information on how to use these
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