Megatrends Impacting Design and Innovation

CULTURE
How a shifting cultural landscape will shape tomorrow's consumers.

Celebrating the Taboo
Previously provocative products and industries will be widely discussed and marketed on a global scale

>Marijuana
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>–The "Canna-business" is a burgeoning industry as laws and cultural stigmas begin to reform.
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>Normalizing Sexuality
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>–Sexuality and sexual health is being widely discussed as an important facet of overall wellness.
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>–Sleekly designed sex toys, intimate objects, and health products with a focus on sexuality will appear more widely in mainstream markets.

Re-Thinking Gender
We are witnessing the dissolution of traditional gender roles and identities; gender will be defined as a spectrum, not a binary.

>–Historically gender-divisive industries (i.e. Health and Beauty) are re-thinking the dialogue; think Make-Up for Men, the return of androgyny.

Women
It is projected that by 2020 the American workforce will be equally divided between men and women, and women will have more executive roles and competitive pay

>–Unmarried women are an increasing and influential demographic; spending in the grocery and health/beauty categories is significantly higher among single women than their married counterparts.

The Modern Wilderness
As population trends propel towards urbanity, city-dwellers are rediscovering the allure of the great outdoors; a longing to reconnect with nature is experiencing a renaissance through off-the-grid destinations and adventure travel.

Health and Wellness
Consumers want brands to reflect a holistic, healthy lifestyle.
- Eastern Medicine, Ayurveda, and "New Vegans" entering the   mainstream.
- Farm-to-Table will be replaced with Sea-to-Table
- Ultra-Local, Direct-source Delivery Services to bring sustainably sourced products to the urban consumer.

TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN

Mobile-First Shopping
- By 2030 3 out of 4 people will own a connected mobile device
- Consumers will use mobile devices as the primary tool to browse, shop, and share their purchases
- Brands will have to consider this shift in the shopper experience and how to manage and optimize presence on mobile platforms

Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality, and Virtual Reality
Technology has given us the tools to design and create a completely immersive reality. There is potential for reaching the consumer and engaging a brand experience in an unprecedented arena.
- As AI technologies advance and disseminate the role of creativity in design will become paramount.
- Advanced technologies are already in the hands of the connected consumer. (Consider how Pokémon Go put AR in the pockets of millions.)

Social Media and Connectivity
Social media has made shopping an interactive, social experience in which browsing and purchasing is melded with direct, instant feedback and dialogue among users.
- 45% of Millennials' purchases are influenced by social media recommendations
- People are looking to social media for advice and trends as well as sharing their own product experiences.
- "Buyable Ads" allow direct purchases through Social Media Outlets
- Design must consider "sharability"; ("would you Instagram that?") and how to establish and maintain a relevant presence on various SMOs.

REIMAGINING THE RETAIL EXPERIENCE
Virtual Retail

The connected consumer wants to be engaged in both the physical and the virtual (mobile, internet) retail space and will expect a seamless experience between the two.

"Shop-able Experience" vs. Traditional Stores

Retail is moving beyond boutiques and department stores and bringing products directly to target consumers with a focus on creating a hands-on, livable experience.
> –Take West Elm Hotels and PIRCH of NYC, who offer an opportunity to interact with brands and products in a real-life environment.

Brick and Mortars as Playgrounds, not Sales floors

Flagships will refocus on offering a tailored experience and interaction with the brand rather than just products.
> –Ideally creating an experience that is attractive to someone who may not be in the market for that particular product, but wants to participate in the brand experience that's being created.
> –Stores to offer services, community, something that is inimitable online, such as athletic stores offering fitness classes and organizing group workouts.