

CreativeRace[®]

hello

**Welcome to
CreativeSpace,
the new webinar
from CreativeRace.**

We are CreativeRace.

An award-winning agency based in Leeds.

**A truly independent
and integrated
marketing agency**

And experts in strategy,
performance, comms
and creativity for brands
in a connected world

We believe in

Work that matters

Work that's meaningful

And work with impact

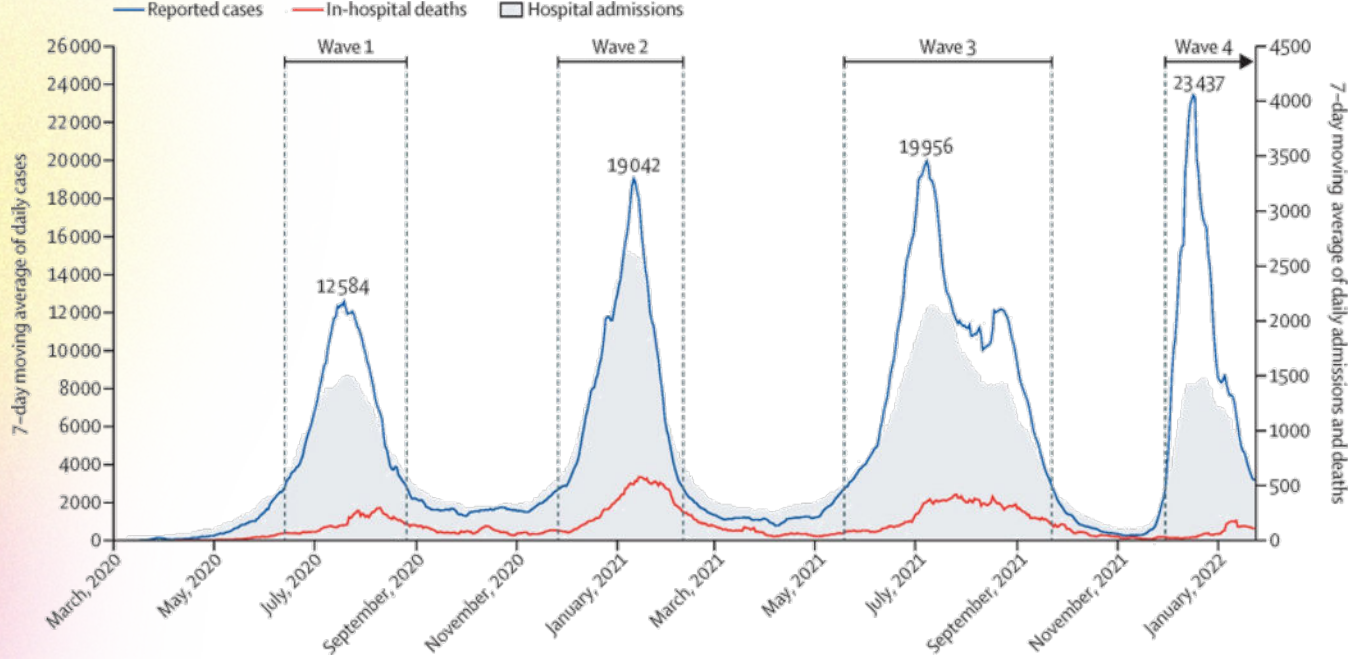
In other words...

**Work with
purpose**

As a strategy-first agency, we're constantly scouting, seeking, searching for what's just around the corner that will impact or move the needle for the brands and clients we work with.

As part of this, we realised early on that so many annual trend reports were out of date a few months in.

Let's cast our minds back to January....

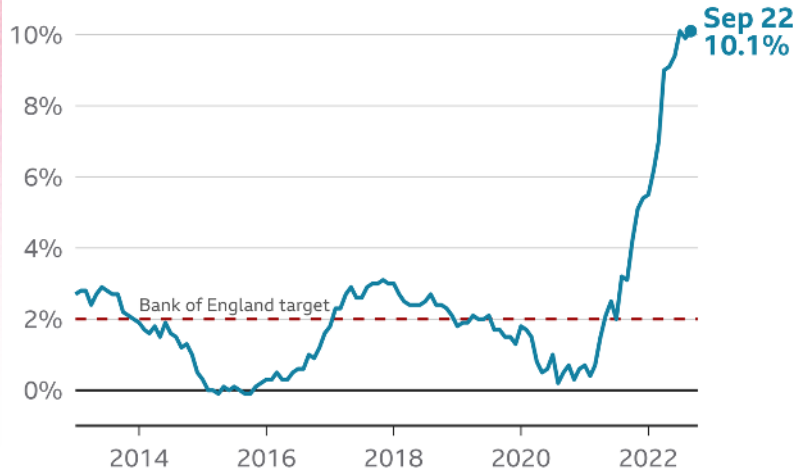


... And fast forward to November?



Inflation at 10.1% in September 2022

Consumer Prices Index



Source: Office for National Statistics



**Things change...
Quickly!**

**We work with brands day-in, day-out,
and know that campaigns, projects
and briefs are rarely a year out, nor
can they go live immediately.**

And we felt there was a lack of decent trend analysis and conversation covering that awkward midterm period.

We care about the world we'll be living in in 3-6 months...

- What will be the biggest news stories?
- What will consumers care about?
- And what does it all mean for brands?

So we thought we'd fix it.

So - let's cut to the chase - or more precisely, let's cut to Spring 2023.

What will people be thinking, doing and feeling?

We've broken our trends down into four key areas:

Political / Economic

Social

Technology

Environment

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United We Stand

**Will politics – so hot on the agenda right now – still be on the table come spring?
Who knows – and to some extent, how much does it matter...?**

To the modern mainstream - the customers on the street - whilst politics might be an interesting distraction, for those outside of the confines of Whitehall, it actually has limited impact on day to day life.

Politics is increasingly centrist, and the difference between a Conservative and Labour government in power is limited, and most of us are (mercifully) limited to feeling the impact of political peacocking and power-wrestling.

What is important, however, is how united we are as a country against the Westminster farce. Never have we been so united as a nation against politicians - and that's an interesting place for brands to tap into.

Change isn't going anywhere, rhetoric will remain high (whoever is in power – we're not crazy enough to try and predict that!!) and people will be more engaged in political issues than ever before - but in a sort of united mockery.

So be ready to react quickly, adapt comms and don't be afraid to have fun.



Ticking Time Bomb

Inflation, soaring interest rates, economic uncertainty – sadly whatever happens, the impact of Autumn '22 won't disappear overnight.

The Cost of Living Crisis is going to disproportionately hit some demographic groups more than others as mortgage rates expire and repayments double, or treble - piling food prices in comparison.

Whatever the government does over the coming months, there are going to be a lot of people more worse off than today.

This means value is going to become paramount. Not just in absolute terms, but also relative. Offering value - wherever possible - is key, but more important is showing why the products you sell offer value.

And that doesn't just have to be financial. In 2008 De Beers ran a fantastic campaign selling diamonds in a global recession by reframing them as an investment forever. And it worked.

Unlike that recession, this turbulence isn't a global phenomenon. We won't all be affected equally, so think about the product you sell (is it high price, low price, a one-off, something we have lots of?) and think about where it fits in your customers' lives and how you can translate the benefit, and value, it brings.

1.3 million

The amount of people that will fall into absolute poverty next year

44% of adults who were responsible for energy bills, and **28%** responsible for mortgage or rent costs, were finding it **'very or somewhat' difficult to make the payments**

25% of households with children experienced food insecurity in September 2022

Source: Forbes Analysis on economics forecasts

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Wishful Optimism

Whilst we might have a Christmas reprieve from the doom and gloom, off the back of potential blackouts in Jan / Feb and sky-high inflation, things are going to be tough for a while yet...

Unlike most recessions or downturns, we're off the back of a pandemic which means consumers will be looking to make up for lost time and let off steam to get away from the dreariness of those early spring days - which means wishful optimism will return with people seeking ways to escape the ordinary.

But those pervasive four words - Cost of Living Crisis - aren't going to be going anywhere, with the energy cap removal in April, mortgage rates hiking and food prices still soaring.

So customers will want to escape the ordinary, but may not be able to.

Look for ways to help customers do this, with low-cost experiences or making the most of what we have, and engage in ways to step out of the humdrum and build excitement for the summer to come. It's a well-documented phenomenon that in times of recession, sales of small luxuries rise - designer lipsticks and the like - as people seek small ways to treat themselves and make the best of tough times.



The Milestone Year

We've had nearly three years of COVID-led upheaval – which has mean postponing significant life events for many. Expect that to change...

Wedding a go-go: postponed engagements during the pandemic and a chaotic series of rearranged weddings to make up for two years of chaos are now finally behind us, and we're expecting this spring / summer to be big on the wedding (and other big social occasion/milestone) planning radar.

Baby frenzy is also on the cards - we never saw the baby boom predicted during Covid, as locked up couples did anything but what some had predicted. Faced with uncertainty and isolation, in hindsight it makes sense.

But now we're out of that, we're expecting a spurt of new offspring - with couples who delayed thinking about the future now more confident to start a family.

Look for ways to help customers either going through these momentous life changes, or celebrating others doing so. Be it marketing comms for event-ready dressing, or tapping into habit-disrupting life changes – these are mammoth events that drive real behavioural change. And it's a great excuse to stay relevant with thumb-stopping content that's relevant but also reflective of the need to celebrate even in challenging economic times.



2.3m weddings expected in 2023, just down from the peak of 2.5m in 2022 (as a result of two years of cancellations), but significantly ahead of 2019 – in fact, the largest non-COVID year since 1984.

13.2% of millennials in the US are quoted as saying they will be trying for a baby, or expect to have a child in the next year.

Source: Business Insider

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Time to (Virtually) Play

Metaverse. Do we Care?

The importance of the metaverse stems from its ability to provide a shared environment and economy for all people, regardless of their location.

But does it matter and is it going to take off in the mainstream soon? Probably not - for most of us.

And that's reflected in the actions of CMOs - 52% of whom are not advertising in the metaverse yet, citing lack of ROI as the main reason.

But that looks set to change - and soon - with 42% looking to invest in the metaverse in the next year. The goal of this investment - like with any new emerging tech - is not ROI, but experimentation.

For our youngest demographics - those Gen Alphas coming of age and Gen Z - the metaverse is already a place they engage. So it's important to understand, because if not us, then our kids will be - and are - engaging, and now (not when it truly hits the mainstream) is the time to play, fail and learn about what works for your brand.

Most brands have no idea what's going on or what the metaverse really means, which means it's the prime opportunity to make the most of this uncertain time - make your move, experiment, trial and adapt so you can hit the ground running while everyone else catches up.

52%

of CMOs are not advertising in the metaverse yet, citing lack of ROI as the main reason.

But that looks set to change - and soon:

42%

of CMOs are looking to invest in the metaverse in the next year. The goal of this investment - like with any new emerging tech - is not ROI, but experimentation.

Source: Campaign Live

Superapps

We all love convenience. Anything to make life simpler.


It's why out of town shopping centres have been such a hit - a one-stop destination for all your needs. And apps have caught on. The rise of superapps is coming, and soon.

With Elon Musk's investment in Twitter, many commentators were questioning 'why'? But look to China's WeChat. Originally a messaging app, WeChat has expanded into a commerce platform to enable its 1.25 billion active monthly users to conduct a variety of day-to-day tasks.

In 2020, Facebook introduced shopping capabilities to encourage its users to make transactions on the social media platform rather than elsewhere.

The overarching driver is essentially that more data = more money. And the more you offer users, the more data you're likely to get.

So is this Musk's aim - to convert Twitter into the next superapp? Only time will tell - but whatever he's up to, they can't be ignored. Ultimately the aim of superapps is to be one of the remaining 30 or so apps on people's home screens - with all the detritus deleted and pushed aside. Your customer will likely be engaging, shopping, using them - even if they don't know it - so it's key to get your brand prominent and optimised for them.



Originally a messaging app, WeChat has expanded into a commerce platform to enable its **1.25 billion** active monthly users to conduct a variety of day-to-day tasks.

Source: Forbes Analysis

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Hot Hot Hot

Seasons are changing, and spring - once mild and stable - is increasingly volatile.

February / March are now our coldest months, not what we often class as 'Winter' (December / Jan) with snow and ice often appearing and disrupting life later in the year.

Despite the common view of April Showers, April / May are now two of our driest months - with heatwaves not uncommon and temperatures we'd think of as 'peak summer'.

Gone are the days of predictable weather, particularly in Spring - it swings from one extreme to another like nothing else at this point in the year - but we still plan weddings for July / August (two of our wettest months), summer holidays are scheduled for then and BBQ season marketing kicks off at the end of June.

So think about how to harness this with your marketing to stand out from the crowd - can you do weather activations, tailored messages or adapt launches (bringing forward summer launches for example). There's nothing worse than getting a "spring is here, pick from our new range of sandals" message when it's snowing outside.



Recent decades have been warmer, wetter and sunnier than in the 20th century – with hotter but wetter summers, and drier sunnier spring. April 2021 was the sunniest on record since 1920.

The Great CO2 Detox

It's not just 'bad' categories that are addressing their CO2 impact.

Outside of the 'bad' categories such as cars and energy, low CO2 variants are becoming increasingly talked about as consumers wake up to the fact that everything they buy or use has a trail from origin to home. We're already seeing low CO2 options springing up, but as consumers become more aware, we expect a rapid shift to much more CO2 conscious consumption.

Wasa introduced the CO2 detox: just water and 10 slices of knäckebröd which can reduce an individual's diet's climate footprint by 95%. The crispbread maker is encouraging customers to give it a try with the aim to get people thinking about the environmental impact of what they eat. Expressed as a fraction of a kilogram of an invisible chemical compound, a carbon dioxide footprint can seem all too abstract, but Wasa's campaign works by visualising what an ultra-low CO2 diet could look like: those ten pieces of crispbread that equal a 95% reduction compared to what the average person eats in a day.

So think about your brand and supply chain – and the impact you have on the world. Even in high-impact sectors, there are ways to overcome the potential negativity by facing into the problem head-first and acting early to acknowledge and minimise your impact. Most importantly, whatever you do – contextualise what this means for customers with real comparisons.



It's Vintage Baby

The time is now.

The weeks of Extinction Rebellion protests we've just seen. The rise of vintage shopping. The exposés on fast fashion workers' conditions (which Channel 4 do brilliantly if you haven't seen them).

Gen Z have long been aware and advocates of doing the sustainable right thing and shunning gratuitous purchases, but this is attitude pervading and normalising across cohorts.

And this is expected to increase, and soon.

Expect more focus and noise from all demographics on provenance, manufacturing processes, and waste removal. Customers are balancing tight economic times, but gone are the days of either/or. They expect honesty, transparency and commitment if they are going to hand over their hard-earned cash.

And they're more aware, curious and conscious than ever – promises need to be kept, claims need to be substantiated and followed-through.

Avoid any unsubstantiated claims (see Nike offering to recycle trainers in all stores, but then not actually doing it in the UK). Think about your end-to-end supply chain and what you'd be proud / ashamed of – and how you can fix it. Think about how you can add less, not more, to the world with everything you do – from vintage resales to repairing old products.



44%
surge
in sales
on online
vintage
platforms
like the
RealReal.



And that's it! Our key trends, themes and predictions for Spring 2023

Political / Economic

- **United We Stand**
- **Ticking Time Bomb**

Social

- **Wishful Optimism**
- **The Milestone Year**

Technology

- **Time to (Virtually) Play**
- **Superapps**

Environment

- **Hot Hot Hot**
- **The Great CO2 Detox**
- **It's Vintage Baby**

Q&A

Thank you.

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