TRENDING 2017
Anticipate disruption. Act on insight. Own the future.
Foreword

Trending 2017 is the latest edition of Foresight Factory’s annual report looking ahead to the next 12 months, examining consumer trends and behaviour. Now in its twentieth year, Foresight Factory (formerly Future Foundation) is the world’s leading independent trends agency, partnering with our clients to help them Own the Future through understanding and commercially exploiting consumer trends.

This report is drawn from multiple insight sources including: our rolling annual research with 40,000+ online respondents across 25 global markets; qualitative insights from social media listening research; commentary from our global network of 500 Trendspotters and 1000s of fresh examples of commercial innovation across 20 key industry sectors.

The data is analysed by our team of in-house experts who adjust for regional differences and compare the results against third party data sources to unearth, monitor and forecast the salient trends that will guide consumer behaviour and commercial expectation in 2017 and beyond. Our ultimate purpose? To help companies and brands determine how to act.

Respondents to the survey are aged 16+ and the sample is weighted to be nationally representative of the offline population across age, gender and region.
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All things considered, 2017 is a good time to be alive. Life expectancy climbs ever higher while hunger and extreme poverty trend downwards at a global level; millions travel more extensively and affordably than ever before; technologies connect, entertain and empower us in new and exciting ways; and issues such as gender equality and mental wellbeing continue to rise up the socio-political agenda.

Nonetheless, a zeitgeist of unsettled uncertainty will prevail in 2017. Ours is a precarious age in which economic prospects appear to be permanently uncertain and in which robust disrespect for the established authorities of the day - from our political leaders to the structures that govern our lives - grows. Many will enter 2017 in an iconoclastic mood.

Uncertainty may provide the mood music but 2017 will also be a year of consumers empowering their on- and offline lives; of brands seeking new, emotion-rich and conversational intimacies with novelty-seeking consumers; and of new technologies promising to augment consumers’ virtual and real-world environments. Welcome to Trending 2017.
Influencing emotion is vital to business success. Understanding consumer mood allows you first to emotionally track consumer sentiment towards your brand and ensure that the message you think you are giving is being received, and second, to actively manage your consumer’s mood for more positive brand-consumer engagement.

**ACTION:**
Invest in augmented emotional intelligence

The Bentley Inspirator app tracked facial changes while consumers watched visual stimuli. The emotional responses were turned into recommendations.

Emojis are used to augment speech with emotion

This cry-laughter can mean a lot more than typing a long paragraph.

Henry, CHINA

Source: FF Online Research  |  Base: 1000-5000 online respondents per country aged 16-64 (Indonesia & S. Africa 16-54), 2016 February
Source: Global Trendspotter Network, 2016
Eye tracking systems alone are not enough to understand the complex emotional experience of a consumer. Only by adopting holistic emotional intelligence systems will brands be able to track both conscious and non-conscious responses. By 2018 conscious emotional clues are set to explode as the number of consumers posting emojis every day could increase by up to double the current figure.

PREDICTION:
Emoji super users will double
The trends we’re tracking...

**The Warming Web**
The online world is warming, with a focus upon generating personal relationships between brand and consumer built on a foundation of emotional engagement.

*Tracked since: June 2014*

**The Multi-Social Consumer**
Communication is being augmented. Emojis, GIFs, videos... are being used to inject emotion into digital conversation.

*Tracked since: July 2014*

**Pursuit of Real**
The quest for authenticity beyond product provenance and into brand-led discovery of our “true selves”.

*Spotted: September 2016*

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Emojis were first invented in Japan in 1999 and were first added to iOS in 2010.

1999

2014

2015

2017

December 2014: Instagram has 300 million users.

May 2015: Facebook announces official support for GIFs, they now play automatically in newsfeeds.

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May 2015: Facebook announces official support for GIFs, they now play automatically in newsfeeds.
Inconvenience and delay are the biggest barriers to purchase. Seamless payment linked to identity can lubricate transactions and encourage spend. The expansion of biometric authentication systems eliminate the need for pins and passwords, and will secure and speed up the payment process.

**ACTION:**
Link identity to transactions

Apple’s Touch ID embedded into Mac for speedy, secure online payments

Mac users can make secure payments using Apple Pay with one touch through fingerprint recognition integrated into the laptop’s power button.

24% of consumers have given up on an in-store purchase because the queue to pay was **too long**

9% of consumers have given up on an online purchase because the payment process took **too long**

Source: FFonline Research | Base: (all who have given up buying something while shopping in a store in last six months) online respondents per country aged 16+ (China 16-64), 2015 September

Source: FFonline Research | Base: 1000-2000 online respondents per country aged 16+ (China 16-64), 2016 October
More areas of consumers’ lives will become linked to identity - social transactions as well as commercial transactions will be captured. As governments, tech companies and Financial Services race to be the first to digitise identity, a global debate on who owns this information will awaken.
The trends we’re tracking...

**Cashless Society**

- 2007: The first contactless cards were issued in the UK by Barclaycard.
- 2011: **Uber** launches in San Francisco. It gives both drivers and passengers a rating.
- 2014: **Apple Pay** is released.

**The Digital Passport**

The arrival of truly verified online identities, offering instant verification, uninterrupted experience and heightened security for every individual.

Newly spotted: November 2016

**The 5-Star Customer**

Customers can now expect to be rated by companies and service providers.

Tracked since: Nov, 2015


2007: The first contactless cards were issued in the UK by Barclaycard.
Discovery is narrowing as the only options we see when we search are personalised to our preferences. In order to be seen, brands need to tap into the trends that make people share by using new non-verbal languages, providing opportunities for people to be performative and creating and fostering communities.

ACTION: Become a filter bubble brand

Consumers are using their networks to inform and inspire what they buy

Recommendations is a new feature from Facebook which allows people to directly consult their networks for advice on anything from products to buy, to places to travel.

People are shopping by search not by store: your brand needs to feature in these results to be seen

When shopping for clothes online I always go to Shopstyle and type in what I’m looking for.

Charlie, UK

Source: Global Trendspotter Network, 2016
Discovery is being transformed by platformisation. Alexa, Siri and a raft of smart household devices can order for you, sometimes even automatically when stocks are low. Brands can get bypassed in this world as consumers communicate only with the delivery mechanisms and outsource brand choice to them.
The trends we’re tracking...

**Conversational Commerce**
Messaging apps are overtaking social networks in terms of users - and brands are starting to follow; engaging consumers via IM for friendlier, more personalised communication.

*Tracked since: June 2016*

**Life on Demand**
Shrinking delivery times, tap-of-a-button orders and instant gratification.

*Tracked since: November 2015*

**Branding Bypass**
The arrival of auto-replenishing products combined with the possibility of the dominance of one AI platform means that brands could get bypassed and relegated to background supplier.

*Newly spotted: October 2016*
With the arrival of the micro video, content has been getting progressively shorter and livestreaming adds an extra layer of immediacy by making each second unmissable. Livestreaming is not just about short - it relies on a genuine connection between streamer and viewer. Lower quality and the (current) inability to edit reinvents what we mean by corporate transparency.

In China, where livestreaming and vlogging is most prevalent, it is normal for the audience to interact with vloggers by sending virtual gifts that are then traded in for money.

**Viewers vs. Doers: % of those who view livestreams that post streams of themselves**

- **China**: 51% view and 45% post streams.
- **USA**: 43% view and 43% post streams.
- **Sweden**: 33% view and 33% post streams.
- **GB**: 30% view and 31% post streams.
- **Germany**: 30% view and 30% post streams.

Source: FF Online Research | Base: 1000 online respondents aged 16+, GB, US, Germany, Sweden, China, 2016 September
KEY PREDICTIONS

**PREDICTION:**
Livestreaming is the new authentic

The high production values and slick editing that characterise vlogs will soon seem inauthentic in contrast to candid moments captured on livestreams. The more amateur feel will also attract higher usage and we predict that the audience will soon become the creators. This will make livestreams both entertainment and a means of communication.
The trends we’re tracking...

**Peer Power**
The digital revolution enables consumers to connect to offer advice, reviews and influence.
*Tracked since: Oct, 2012*

**The Cult of Immediacy**
One of our longest tracked trends, the consumer desire for immediacy is insatiable.
*Tracked since: 2003*

**Content a la Carte**
Content is no longer constrained by schedules, platforms or spaces.
*Tracked since: April, 2014*

**Celebrity Next Door**
Traditional sources of entertainment, influence and celebrity are being challenged by the arrival of the daily-vlogging, tribe-forming blogger.
*Tracked since: Nov, 2014*

Oct, 2013: **Twitch** receives 45 million unique viewers

Jan, 2016: Chinese livestreaming app **Inke** receives $10 million in funding.

December, 2015: Zoella reaches 9.9 million subscribers

Oct, 2015: launch of livestreaming app **Periscope**

Consumers want shortcuts to slowing down. Last year we saw the explosion of adult colouring books, this year it is hygge: these fads are a powerful manifestation of a deeper consumer need. Downtime or relaxation is becoming a significant segment of consumers’ leisure spend.

Source: FFonline Research | Base: 1000-5000 online respondents per country aged 16-64 (Indonesia & S. Africa 16-54), 2016 February
Source: Google Trends (www.google.com/trends/nVision), Worldwide (English speakers), 2016
Mindfulness, hygge, spirituality - or whatever you want to call it, this slow way of living is becoming popular and legitimised as consumers seek permission to pause and recharge. Having enough rest will become the new badge of honour and we will see an increase in consumers openly sharing their unstructured downtime with their friends, family and wider social networks.
The trends we’re tracking...

**The Death of Objects**
How multi-functional devices threaten the existence of CDs, books, cameras...
Spotted: Aug, 2012

**Brainstorms at Bedtime**
Always-on tech colonises night-time.
Tracked since: May, 2013

**The Romantic Minimalist**
Many want to replace clutter with quality.
Tracked since: July, 2015

**Mastering the Mind**
The mind becomes the next frontier for exploration and optimisation.
Tracked since: Feb, 2016

**Sleep Mode**
Recharging our bedtimes...
Newly spotted: Nov, 2016


April, 2016: *Headspace* has 6 million users

May, 2016: France passes “Right to disconnect”
ACTION:  
Great brands are like great people

You need substance. For a brand, this means functional attributes such as value for money and quality. Then, you need magic in the form of strong values that are the essence of your brand and define how you do business. Values can tap into traditional CSR but do not have to: only when CSR values are hardwired into the essence of your brand will they truly boost engagement.

What influences brand advocacy?

**POSITIVE**
- Value for money
- Best quality
- Innovative
- Genuine
- Inspires me
- Makes me feel good
- Cool and impressive

**NO CLEAR RELATION**
- Reliable
- Help achieve goals
- Convenient
- Easy to use
- Pay flexibly
- Good reputation
- Fun and entertaining
- Reflect my personality
- Environmentally friendly
- Treats workers well
- Good customer service

**NEGATIVE**
- Exclusive and personalised promotions
- Reward my loyalty

Source: FFonline Research | Base: 1000-5000 online respondents per country aged 16-64 (Indonesia & S. Africa 16-54), 2016 February
PREDICTION:
Key to success: live your brand values

Brands must live and breathe their values to survive. Loyalty programmes are currently transactional, they must also be infused with the brand in order to truly build long-term advocacy rather than precarious promotion-led loyalty.
The trends we’re tracking...

**The Good Company**
Expectations surrounding CSR sharpen, inviting brands to demonstrate that they care about more than the mere pursuit of profit.
Spotted: Jan, 2012

**Native Marketing**
The arrival of content marketing turns all brands into entertainers.
Spotted: Dec, 2012

**Functional Trust**
Functional features drive trust more than CSR ventures.
Tracked since: June, 2014

**Quantified Goodness**
Using blockchain and a data-driven approach to track and measure CSR.
Newly spotted: Nov, 2016

**Story-Seekers**
The desire to enrich lives by seeking novelty, excitement and stories to tell.
Tracked since: June, 2016

Sept, 2016: Startup **Provenance** trials using blockchain to track tuna
The notion that there are natural limits to our physical and intellectual abilities is progressively weakening. For healthcare and tech brands, the future is not only in finding solutions to human illness and frailties, but also finding ways to improve the mental and physical performance of the healthy through augmentation and bio-upgradable technology.

In 2016, Samsung was awarded a patent for smart contact lenses. The technology would bring augmented reality (AR) down to a micro-level by overlaying a contact lens with internet-connected services.

% interested in contact lenses which allow them to see in the dark

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<td>USA</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>46%</td>
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Source: FFonline Research | Base: 1000-5000 online respondents per country aged 16-64 (Indonesia & S. Africa 16-54), 2016 February
In the immediate future, cost, fear and ethics will be strong barriers to uptake of invasive augmentation and implants. Therefore in the short-term we see take up of wearables, hearables, pharmaceuticals and external brain computer interfaces.

We expect interest in e-skins to grow, particularly in the realm of fitness tracking. These embed technology into super thin and super flexible materials so that they can be worn like a temporary tattoo.
The trends we’re tracking...

2010: Gary Wolf coins the term “quantified self” in a TED talk.

**Appearance Matters**
- Appearance optimisation...
  - Tracked since: October, 2010

**The Quantified Self**
- Using wearables to track, and improve, performance
  - Tracked since: November 2010

2011: Pistorius becomes the first amputee to win a non-disabled world track event.

**The Everyday Athlete**
- Ordinary consumers adopting the mindset and approach of a premium athlete
  - Tracked since: Jan, 2016

**Beyond Human**
- Smart implants, high performance prosthetics and memory enhancement look to bio-upgrade the healthy.
  - Newly spotted: April 2016

2015: 19% global consumers self-monitor exercise

2015: sales of smart drugs (aka nootropics) exceed $1 bn worldwide

2017: sales of sports-related protein products set to reach £7.8bn worldwide

Source: nVision Research | Base: 1000-5000 online respondents per country aged 16-64 (Indonesia & S. Africa 16-54), 2015 February

Source: Euromonitor
Advancements in augmented reality, holographic interfaces and hearable devices make the notion of a truly customisable reality possible. Additional information can be overlaid onto the world, such as in-ear real time translation. Brands that effectively occupy these spaces can give consumers control over the level of reality they want.

**ACTION:**
Let people customise their reality

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Pilot is a smart earpiece which uses speech recognition technology to translate conversations into different languages in real time.

### Use of and interest in “hearable” technology

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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>34%</td>
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Source: FFonline Research | Base: 1000-2000 online respondents per country aged 16+ (China 16-64), 2016 October
The arrival of wireless headphones effectively primes the market for accepting hearable devices. As well as offering superior audio quality, hearables offer a more invisible way to interact with technology, track biometrics and augment surroundings either by filtering out unwanted ambient noise or accessing additional in-ear information.

PREDICTION:

Hearables take centre stage
The trends we’re tracking...

2014: Google announces Android Wear which promises smart, context-aware updates: “information that moves with you”.

March 2014: Facebook acquires Oculus Rift

Immerse Me
VR promises more immersive, magical, personalised experiences.
Tracked since: June 2015

Casual Connectivity
The arrival of tech which promises to be invisible, rather than interruptive.
Tracked since: July, 2014

Customised Reality
Augmented reality devices, whether visual, aural or multi-sensory, offer consumers a new kind of customisable reality
Newly spotted: Nov, 2016

March 2016: pre-production HoloLens shipped to developers

Sept 2016: Apple announces iPhone 7 will have no headphone jack

2014 2015 2016
Appendix
About Foresight Factory

Foresight Factory, formerly Future Foundation, works with some of the world's leading companies to help them 'Own the Future'.

Globally headquartered in London, with offices in New York, Singapore and Stockholm we are masters of prediction, constantly scouring the globe to pick apart behaviour, spotting trends and disruption before they happen.

Our principal delivery? A unique and highly customisable digital platform, FFonline, that marries best-in-class data science with editorial creativity, to give our 200+ clients 24/7 access to predictive insights from 50,000 consumer voices and a global network of 500 Trendspotters across 28 markets. We also offer consultancy, undertaking custom projects to help clients answer complex questions.

To find out more about Foresight Factory, please visit www.foresightfactory.co where you can register for demo of FFonline, or contact our team.