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A MONTH IN MEDIA



INNOVATION OF THE MONTH

NOVEMBER 2016

Intel and Walt Disney Parks and Resort are collaborating on a drone-based holiday show at the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida.

Drones are a major component of Intel's strategy to generate innovative uses of technology using Intel's powerful resources. Debuting all-new Intel Shooting Star drones (a new type of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) specifically designed for entertainment purposes such as festivals and air and light show), the "Starbright Holidays" show at Walt Disney Resort will paint colorful images across the sky over the Disney Springs shopping, dining and entertainment district. Additionally, "Starbright Holidays" marks the first time a show-drone performance of this scale has ever been performed in the United States, featuring over 300 Intel Shooting Star drones in a choreographed aerial act set to holiday-themed music across the sky.

The creative use of drones by Intel, in partnership with Disney, proves how combining the resources of an innovative company and a dynamic entertainment brand can generate a unique use of technology and an engaging experience. Finding ways to collaborate with unexpected partners and technology sources will create first-to-market experiences and interesting campaigns that put your brand at the forefront.

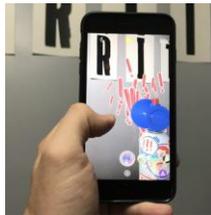


VIEW FROM THE TOP — EMERGING MACRO TRENDS THAT SHOULD BE ON YOUR RADAR

TECHNOLOGY & LIFESTYLE

REIMAGINING CONTENT EXPERIENCES WITH AR

Whether it was the Pokémon frenzy that stole consumers' hearts (and batteries) over the summer, or the upsurge of Snapchat that had users throwing up rainbows, the reality of augmented reality (AR) is not to be taken lightly. Brands are investing in AR companies while media platforms are introducing more and more ways to engage with consumers by unobtrusively layering information via mobile devices over consumers' real world.



Snapchat recently introduced their "World Lenses," a new product offering that allows users to apply different AR graphics to the world around them instead of just on selfies. Facebook is working on camera technology that overlays artwork onto live video. Although there is no release date yet, an AR future is foreseeable for the media giant, particularly for their Live product that they are extensively pushing. Apple is also planning to integrate AR into their camera app, with a focus on expanding to hardware, to put AR technology into consumers' hands and change how consumers are receiving and interacting with content.

Despite the entertainment application of AR by Snapchat and Facebook, future AR possibilities are endless. Be it an option to hover over an item to trigger AR graphics overlaying product information or a virtual x-ray displaying what is inside, brand possibilities are becoming more real as AR reimagines content.



MEDIA & CULTURE

AS WE EVOLVE, OUR LANGUAGE DOES TOO

The only guaranteed constant is change, as culture, and the people driving it, continue to evolve. These changes, both subtle and obvious, not only impact each other, but also shape aspects of everyday life. Language, for example, is an ever-changing process. The meaning of words shifts over time as we adopt different processes and platforms to speak and engage with one another.



For example, the evolution of the word "like" can be traced from being a term used as a comparative tool linguistically meaning 'similar to' to becoming a phrase representing hesitation or filling a blank space during one's thought process. Today, "like" often acts as a modal marker of the human mind at work in conversation and can reposition a phrase or comment to soften its blow. "Like" has also evolved into a noun; someone can ask, "how many likes did you get on that Instagram?" in reference to the social response to shared content. Although older generations may dismiss it as laziness in speak or unprofessionalism, "like" is a new part of youth dialect.

Whether it is adopting the current ways of using "like" or ephemeral phrases (e.g. last year's "on fleek"), words are constantly evolving and embracing new meanings, uses and contexts. As marketers, it is essential to understand how to master today's language to ensure your communications reflect current lexicon, and do not feel outdated or corny when communicating with consumers. If language does not sit still, why should we?



THE REAL 2016 ELECTION WINNER: LIVESTREAMING

The 2016 U.S. Election coverage brought in the highest ratings in cable news history. CNN came out on top with an average of 13.3 million viewers, during the 8:00-11:00PM EST period, while Fox News had the most-viewed hour of coverage with 15.4 million viewers from midnight to 1:00AM EST. Although cable networks broke records, it was not just the traditional platforms that found huge success on Election night. ABC News, The New York Times, The Washington Post, BuzzFeed and others hosted their own streaming coverage. BuzzFeed's "Election Night Live: We Did It America"—distributed exclusively on Twitter—was unique, as it featured BuzzFeed hosts referencing memes while taking shots of alcohol, illustrating the standout ability of livestream and non-traditional platforms. The livestream pulled in 6.8 million unique viewers across the globe, a major win for the platform.



CONTENT

With live events, streaming on social is certainly an engaging way to reach younger audiences, particularly on mobile. For BuzzFeed, the platform was successful, with 83% of viewers under 35 years old and almost three in four watching via their mobile devices. While some may have been shocked by the election results, media companies were certainly impressed by the ratings as this contentious election season (finally) came to a close. For brands, it is important to consider how to leverage content and be entertaining during key events. Whether it involves offering a unique perspective to engage with the election, such as BuzzFeed's drinking game, or offering a different outlet to watch the excitement like a Facebook Live or even a Snapchat Story, being a player during a historical and rather important moment in is essential. >>

MOBILE LEADS BLACK FRIDAY SHOPPING

After a day of being grateful, Black Friday shopping is an experience many Americans participate in. New data from PayPal shows that mobile led the way over Thanksgiving and Black Friday this year, accounting for a third of all total payment volume on both days this year. This trend toward mobile usage on Black Friday is reflected in other reports as well, including those from Adobe, which claimed that mobile purchases helped contribute more than \$1 billion in revenue on Black Friday. In contrast, Google revealed that store foot traffic jumped 65% on Black Friday, compared to an average weekend day in November, but these numbers do not include year-over-year figures so it is difficult to determine the trend. As the final numbers roll in, including Cyber Monday sales, it will be interesting to see the growth (or decline) YoY.



ECOMMERCE

There are numerous factors driving mobile's increasing role in seasonal shopping. Many consumers want to get a good deal and cannot wait until the physical retail stores open to find them. Another reason may be consumers checking for cheaper options while simultaneously browsing selections at retail locations, a behavior known as webrooming. Whatever the case may be, understanding how consumer shopping behaviors are evolving and investing in ecommerce strategies that complement and seamlessly enable these behaviors, such as location-based marketing and digital payments, can help drive sales both on and offline. As consumers increasingly fail to see a difference between online and offline shopping, marketing strategies should reflect this, too. >>

YOU CAN NOW SHOP INSTAGRAM

Instagram has taken a big step into the ecommerce world by rolling out a feature which allows brands to 'tag' products in photos. Clicking one of these tags will send users directly to the brand's website, quickly enabling consumers to make a purchase. As James Quarles, Instagram VP of Monetization, describes, this feature is designed more to "reduce the friction" between steps in the path-to-purchase, rather than reducing the number of steps. Instagram is initially testing this feature in organic posts with partners such as Kate Spade, Warby Parker, Macy's and more. But stay tuned as they will certainly expand this offering.



SOCIAL

With Instagram already a great destination for consumers to discover new products and engage with brands, this offering is a surefire success for both the social platform and businesses alike. As this capability rolls out to more brands, it will enable brands to more seamlessly drive consumers to purchase and no longer interrupt their scrolling experience. Marketers who may have utilized Instagram more as an awareness builder or a place to connect one-on-one with consumers, will be able to leverage this ecommerce tagging feature to drive lower funnel metrics while racking up the social 'likes.' >>

WHAT
TODAY'S
DIGITAL
PLAYERS
ARE SAYING

PANDORA IS SELLING BRANDED REPLAYS AND SKIPS BASED ON MUSIC GENRE >>

SNAPCHAT PARTNERS WITH FOURSQUARE TO ENABLE BETTER TARGETED GEOFILTERS >>

FACEBOOK ACQUIRES EMOTION DETECTION STARTUP, FACIOMETRICS >>

INSTAGRAM LAUNCHES DISAPPEARING LIVE VIDEO AND MESSAGES >>

PINTEREST'S NEW "TRIED IT" BUTTON KEEPS TRACK OF EXPERIENCES

Pinterest rolled out a way to track and share the things you have actually done or purchased with their new "Tried It" button. Users can now click the checkmark at the top of the pin to note they tried it, as well as click "Love it," "Not for Me" or add in photos and comments about their experiences. Along with this is a suite of tools to help users view pins others have tried, and easily see how many of those users recommend the pin to others. This not only offers new utility for those using the platform to assess ideas, but can provide marketers more insight into the effectiveness of Pinterest without requiring users to complete the purchase via Pinterest.



The "Tried It" button has potential to advance Pinterest from a discovery engine to a feedback engine, where users can get personal experiences and recommendations across an array of categories. New categories such as CPG or Home Décor could enjoy a scaled and centralized destination for consumer reviews, similar to the value TripAdvisor brings to the travel category. This feature is only valuable if users adopt this as a core part of their behaviors on Pinterest. If it does get adopted, it likely would offer enough scale to provide insights into brand conversions, as well as opening new touchpoints for consumer feedback and one-to-one engagements.



KEEPIN' IT REAL: PLATFORMS RETHINK RELIABILITY

Major platforms like Facebook, Google and Twitter have addressed the well-publicized backlash they have recently received over fake news and hate speech. An issue that some have theorized played a role in the U.S. Presidential Election. The platforms have updated their advertising policies to ban fake news sites from using their advertising networks and ad-selling software, which could ultimately reduce revenue for each site. On the other hand, Twitter, according to a USA Today report, has suspended several high-profile accounts associated with the alt-right in addition to providing its users with more power to mute conversations based on specific words or phrases.



On one hand, it is great to see that these companies have finally addressed a huge issue but, on the other hand will the changes really work? For Facebook, the policy changes are specifically tied to fake news sources using Facebook's advertising network but it remains to be seen if Facebook will also police the posting of fake stories by individual users. At what point does stopping fake news stories turn into stopping free speech? It is a delicate issue to navigate but it is encouraging to see that they are making efforts. With this issue not going away anytime soon, you can safely assume that each company will continue to work on correcting the problem.



APPLE TAPS NBCUNIVERSAL TO SELL THEIR APPLE NEWS ADS

In an effort to boost its News App, which has 70 million unique users, Apple is going to hand over the app's ad sales duties to Comcast's NBCUniversal in an exclusive deal that starts in January. As with the current deal, publishers who put content on the app can still sell their own ads and keep 100% of the revenue, but NBCU will now handle the sales of any remaining ad inventory. Even with Apple handing over those sales duties to NBCU, publishers will still keep 70% of the sales made by NBCU. The deal is just another reminder that Apple does not love selling ads itself, proven by Apple only selling their search-based app advertising themselves.



The move by NBCU is another example of them pivoting to mobile and social platforms in order to open up more ad revenue. NBCU now has major touchpoints across seemingly every media channel which just further enhances their brand positioning. For Apple, they can now focus on continuing to build out Apple News to expand its user base. Look for Apple to put more emphasis on Apple News just as it has done with Apple Music and eBooks over the past few years. If it can continue to grow, it is a service advertisers may want to pay more attention to as it provides an opportunity to reach a large engaged audience via a high quality environment with top content.



HULU REACHES NEW DEALS FOR LIVE TV STREAMING SERVICE

Hulu announced that it has reached a deal with Disney and 21st Century Fox to bring their networks to its Live TV streaming service. The streaming service is planned to launch next year but in terms of content, Hulu seems fully stocked. Content includes Disney's ABC group of networks as well as ESPN. Fox's sports, news and entertainment assets will also be included, bringing the total number of additional networks between the two companies to 35. These deals are in addition to previously announced partnerships with Time Warner which will bring networks such as TNT, TBS, CNN, Cartoon Network, Adult Swim, truTV, Boomerang and Turner Classic Movies to the service.



This is a win for Hulu in providing consumers yet another compelling reason to cord-cut and join its Live TV offering when it launches next year. Expect competitive services such as Netflix, SlingTV, Playstation Vue and AT&T's upcoming DirecTV Now to continue to battle it out over content, pricing and ease-of-use. While Hulu's offering is not expected to match Netflix's best in-class recommendation system or AT&T's tie-in to its comprehensive telecom network, this announcement will definitely keep the streaming wars fascinating in 2017. Stay tuned for updates as the streaming giants expand.

