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A MONTH IN MEDIA

MAY 2017

## VIEW FROM THE TOP

### A CULTURAL MARVEL: FIDGET SPINNERS & UNICORNS

They were seemingly an overnight sensation, selling out worldwide—Fidget Spinners, the handheld devices that look like spinning miniature ceiling fans. The toy, meant to cure restless fingers, has become a promotional pastime for brands to slap their logo on and share with consumers. In the past couple weeks, Microsoft, Goldman Sachs, Coachella and hundreds more, have created branded versions of the toy. The popularity of the Fidget Spinner is parallel to the [Unicorn craze](#)—a phenomenon that is also sweeping the nation turning every product into something rainbow or glittered. Beauty brands like Wet n Wild even created a Unicorn Glow Box with unicorn



SOURCE: THE NEW YORK TIMES

themed makeup, while Starbucks created the Unicorn Frappuccino that dominated social. **Both the Fidget Spinner and unicorns are indicative of cultural trends that come out of nowhere, sweep frenzy and often die just as quickly. Understanding the cultural zeitgeist (i.e. pop culture, the social climate, seasonal activities, etc.) can help brands better understand the drivers of these trends and evaluate whether investing in the virality is beneficial for the brand and consumers.** ▶

## INNOVATION OF THE MONTH

### LEVERAGING RAP'S RHYTHM FOR CHILD STUTTERS

Text messaging is a popular communications tool for everyone, but it is especially useful for people with speech impediments and stutters. As part of their broader 'Powerful Connections' program that shows technology can improve people's lives, Vodafone leveraged a mobile app to help children with stutters. Vodafone channeled the rhythm of rap music to develop the "Get the Flow" app. Since rap music provides a structured flow and rhythm and diversifies vocabulary, the app was



SOURCE: ADWEEK

extremely helpful for children who stutter. In a market with very few solutions rooted in fun and entertainment, "Get the Flow" stands out. **Vodafone's solution to assist those who suffer with communication was an extremely relevant for a telecommunications company. Brands should evaluate what their value proposition is and then strive to create a genuine value exchange for their consumers. Thinking outside of the normalcy and everyday usage of your brand/product can also bring forward unique opportunities that can make your brand rise amongst the competition.** ▶

# TOP HEADLINES & WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

## FACEBOOK DIVES INTO CREATING ORIGINAL SHOWS

Facebook is rolling out two dozen original shows this Fall with two distinct tiers; a tier for premium, long-form content and a tier for shorter, low budget content. A slew of shows will be catered to the teenage audience, including content partnerships with Vox Media, BuzzFeed, ATTN, Group Nine Media and others. **Facebook has struggled to reach the Gen Z audience but by creating teen-centric shows, they will be able to compete with platforms like Snapchat. As more Millennials and Gen Z users are cord cutting, Facebook's announcement allows them to increase time spent with the platform through longer form shows that are already consumed on other streaming platforms (i.e. Netflix.). Marketers should consider potential partnerships through future Facebook ad opportunities within shows or long-form content distribution and keep an eye on Facebook's expanding offerings that may include first-to-market opportunities.** ►

## SNAPCHAT EXPANDS AD OFFERINGS, INCLUDING AR

Snapchat has recently made the largest update to their ad offerings since the first branded filters debuted in 2015. They introduced three new products; Sponsored World Lenses, Audience Lenses and Smart Geofilters. Sponsored World Lenses allow advertisers to create branded world lenses, including 2D or 3D objectives, interactive content and more). The Audience Lenses enable advertisers to buy a guaranteed number of Lens impressions against specific audiences. Smart Geofilters is an updated version of their existing Geofilter with a new functionality to include location information or other real-time information to a nationwide or chain Geofilter. **Even though Facebook is still ahead of Snap in regards to reach and recent advancements in AR, Snap still capitalizes the attention of the Gen Z audience. Brands should keep a close eye on Snap as they are proving they are not giving up in this race and are continuing to improve their offerings.** ►

## PINTEREST LAUNCHES VISUAL SEARCH GUIDES

Pinterest had added a new feature to Lens, their live camera search, that will help pick apart a person's image to make it easier to search specific parts or objects within that image. The new feature is called Visual Guides. Once a picture is taken with the camera, the technology analyzes the image and provides you with products or an array of new ideas based on whatever was scanned by the Lens. **For marketers, the functionality provides a new way to capture intent within Pinterest, providing strong moments to insert product recommendations. With Pinterest's built-in shopping functionality, Visual Guides will help marketers capitalize on the path-to-purchase journey that is taking place on the platform and understand when and where to insert their brand messaging, in order to drive the best results.** ►

## AMAZON ECHO GETS A SCREEN

Amazon introduced the Echo Show, a WiFi-enabled home device with a seven-inch screen that improves the widely successful Alexa-enabled devices. The Echo Show adds sight, sound and motion to the popular Echo devices, enabling consumers to watch their daily news briefs, view tutorials and make FaceTime-esque video calls. Aside from these great use cases, people can also connect the Echo Show to other smart home devices such as lights and security cameras. **With the adoption of voice-controlled speakers predicted to continue rising, this is the next avenue advertisers should focus on leveraging. Marketers can assume that the Echo Show will roll out opportunities for advertisers to serve video within the device. We will be tracking the developments around the Echo Show and will have updates as Amazon makes them available.** ►

## HULU GOES BEYOND ENTERTAINING CONTENT

Hulu left nothing for the imagination at its NewFront earlier this month. Not only did the company finally announce its highly-anticipated TV service, Hulu shared that it will introduce dynamic ad insertion capabilities. Additionally, Hulu is introducing an e-commerce ad unit in conjunction with BrightLine, which will allow viewers to make a purchase directly inside a commercial. Hulu is bringing its new capabilities full circle, promising marketers that they will also be able to measure campaigns running on Hulu across all connected devices. **As video content providers continue to change the TV ad model landscape, Hulu's strategic approach to content partnerships, new ad formats and measurement tools illustrate that it's taking aim at the needs of not just its customers but advertisers as well. Most importantly, the opportunity for consumers to shop within an ad illustrates the new path-to-purchase for consumers.** ▶▶

## GOOGLE PHOTOS HELPS YOU SHARE CONTENT

Google is introducing new features in Google Photos to help you share content with friends and family. One new feature, called Suggested Sharing, uses software to make recommendations about which photos to share and with whom, based on who is in the photos and who you tend to communicate with in the Google Photos app and in Gmail. Shared Libraries, another new feature, will allow you to set up automatic sharing of photos featuring certain people. **Leveraging computer vision technology, location data, artificial intelligence, automation and an understanding of social connections, Google illustrates how they can enable seamless sharing. Marketers should evaluate how they can leverage their data and consumer insights to generate useful tools for their consumers and provide a valuable experience.** ▶▶

## YOU CAN SEARCH INSTAGRAM STORIES FOR HASHTAGS & LOCATIONS

To continue driving engagement based on user interest in specific topics and/or locations, Instagram mimicked Snapchat, introducing the option to search within Instagram Stories for specific locations or hashtags. Additionally, Instagram Hashtag Stories and Location Stories now appear in the Explore section to drive discovery. **Instagram's new search feature and its ability to enable discovery offers brands new opportunities around live events or trending hashtags. For example, users can check the weather, event crowds, major news or other happenings, ideally leading to increased time on the platform and within the Stories product. Marketers can leverage the feature by joining conversations via trending hashtags and popular locations, something to consider for future strategies.** ▶▶

## MORE INDUSTRY BUZZ

PINTEREST ADDED AUTOPLAY VIDEOS TO HOMEFEED & SEARCH ▶▶

CBS LAUNCHED THEIR FIRST SNAPCHAT SHOW STARRING JAMES CORDEN ▶▶

FACEBOOK LIVE LETS YOU ADD A FRIEND TO LIVESTREAM TOGETHER ▶▶

KIK INTRODUCED KIN WALLET, CURRENCY TO USE WITHIN THE CHAT APP ▶▶

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