8 key trends that will shape the future of marketing

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As a futurist, I always remind my clients that the future isn't just somewhere we go but something we actively create. Simply because our actions today directly influence and shape our business of tomorrow. Today, only 1 in 5 brands globally are perceived as making a difference to people's well-being, illustrating the huge disparity between how traditional profit-driven organisations think they are performing and how their stakeholders experience their products and services.

In a world of increasing complexity and challenges, a consistent 4P approach – Purpose alongside Profit – will be key to success in the 21st century's highly competitive business environment.
2. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS A JOURNEY NOT A DESTINATION

It’s not enough to embrace digital tools, you have to use them creatively to make a positive difference to people’s lives. That means fast, accessible and multi-channel platforms that bring tangible benefits for your customers. IKEA’s AR app helps people overcome the problem of visualising a product in their home space. Instead of sketches and tape measure, they use augmented reality (AR) to position virtual products in their home, helping them plan makeovers and get creative about their space. The added benefit for IKEA is reducing the number of customer returns (almost 15%) because people miscalculate how furniture will fit in their home.

3. URBANISATION MEANS OPPORTUNITIES TO DRIVE POSITIVE CHANGE

Tomorrow’s cities have the potential to be living organisms that act as intelligent and automated distribution networks between buildings, transportation, goods and services, connecting people and businesses instantaneously. Big Data is already bringing a whole host of opportunities to enter this space and boost your business image and performance by working for the common good.

For instance, New York “geeks” are using city data analytics to solve longstanding urban challenges and make the city more liveable, while the Citymapper app helps people plan faster, cheaper and smoother journeys in a bid to reinvent the city. Access to and sharing of aggregated data sits at the heart of smart urban development and positive change.

4. SMART LIVING INVITES US TO COLLABORATE FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT

The Internet of Everything (IoE) is bringing connectivity on a grand scale – with 50 billion devices connected by 2020 according to a recent forecast. Phones, wearables, consumer devices and other smart objects are already having silent conversations with each other in the background, opening up a whole new understanding of human behaviour with huge potential to facilitate meaningful experiences and better lives. Already, almost 70% of Americans are taking control of their well-being through digital health monitoring. The key word here is collaboration, since Smart Living is an opportunity for business to collaborate with people to build better life, health and job outcomes.
5. ENGAGE WITH GLOBAL CITIZENS TO BUILD YOUR INFLUENCE

Global Citizens are Millennials who see a world without borders. This mobile and tech-savvy group are vital influencers so you need to make them part of your community, as customers and employees. It’s estimated they will make up half the workforce and most international assignments by 2020.

The key to engagement lies in the 4Ps, since over a third of Millennials believe that the goal of “improving society”, should be at the core of every business. This group wants to know why they should buy from you or work for you – and that’s a clear motivator for ensuring purpose sits at the core of your organisation’s ethos.

6. BETAPRENEURSHIP MEANS SEEING FAILURE AS A LEARNING CURVE

A spirit of Betapreneurship is empowering people and businesses to make change happen by fostering collaboration around a new “redesign and rethink” culture. One of my current favourite disruptive business case is iFixit – a global online repair manual and community that aims to “fix the world, one device at a time”. This positive thinking is implicit in purpose-driven organisations. 3M introduced its 15%

“time to think” programme in 1948, and many great initiatives and innovations like the Post-It note are the result. Similarly, Google’s 20% time invites in-house entrepreneurial thinking and encourages collaboration. Organisations simply must foster disruptive innovation to thrive, as new people-led alliances will be the fuel that drives successful organisations of the future.

7. BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL AND USE RESOURCES WISELY

Business needs to be at the centre of the communities it serves and that means developing new systems and innovation models that take account of how our lives are changing. With concerns about finite resources and a growing interest in the circular economy, people are increasingly favouring access over ownership. Success stories such as Airbnb and Zipcar are just the start of this transition, so you need to look at how you can help people live better lives, use less and build communities based around sharing resources.

8. IT ALL COMES DOWN TO “THE GOOD LIFE”

Conventional ways of measuring success – corporate and individual – are increasingly being re-evaluated, but our goal remains achieving “The Good Life”. All the trends outlined here relate back to this fundamental principle. That means organisations should focus on well-being experiences to build real value and a lasting legacy.

One thing is clear: brands that engage in empathic leadership through a purposeful strategy, and then deliver on their promises to internal and external stakeholders, are best prepared to survive the challenges of the future business environment.
CONNECTIONG THE DOTS

Drawing a “Mindset Diagram” of tomorrow’s people is a great way to connect the eight trends and sum up the core drivers that will underpin tomorrow’s successful digital strategies. Technology Optimisers and Creative Collaborators are people who prioritise “access” and “collaboration”, while Global Sustainers and Inclusive Visionaries look for “community” and “engagement”. The 4P business model I’ve described promotes a “Betterness” agenda by inviting participation and collaboration, also driving “disruptive” ideas that offer meaning and value at every level to ensure sustainable growth. It is liberating.

THE 4Ps

- People
- Planet
- Purpose
- Profit

INNOVATION

Global Citizens

DISRUPTION

Creative Communities

ACCESS

The Global Brain

BETTERNESS

New Models

COLLABORATION

Smart Living

ENGAGEMENT

Well-being 4.0

NEW CHANNELS

Digital Transformation

REPUTATION

Radical Openness

CREATIVE COLLABORATORS

GLOIAL SUSTAINERS

OUR STORY

With a background in design, Anne Lise Kjaer lived and worked in Paris before moving back to her native Denmark, where she founded Kjaer Global in 1988. The following year Kjaer relocated to Hamburg, where trend forecasting, design and colour strategies became the core emphasis of her practice. In 1992, already well established internationally, Kjaer Global opened its London studio.

KJÆR GLOBAL TODAY

Today we are an international trend management consultancy and our core focus is the future of business, communication and innovation, communication and innovation strategies for global corporations. We assist in the initial development process, mapping society drivers, lifestyle patterns and consumer trends into actionable future scenarios. Our tailored consultancy projects, talks and interactive workshops inspire clients across a broad spread of industries and we are proud to work with some of the world’s top organisations.

OUR VISIONARY TEAM

Kjaer Global’s multidisciplinary team track socioeconomic and cultural trends both globally and locally. Our visionary consultants are researchers, narrators, analysts and strategists who focus on key developments in social sciences, global studies, technologies, transportation, urbanism, design and the environment. As a leading force in innovative concepts and future scenarios, we have developed an inspirational Trend Management toolkit based on our unique methodology and we use this to distil our findings and assist clients to plan successful future strategies.

OUR STUDIO

Our studio is located at 157 Archway Road in Highgate, north London. This work/live space is ideal for conceptual trend work. Most team members work remotely but meet regularly to discuss and co-ordinate project work.