2020’s Top Ads in 3 Minutes; 3 Tech Developments That Will Change 2021: Thursday’s First Things First

Welcome to First Things First, Adweek’s daily resource for marketers. We’ll be publishing the content to First Things First on Adweek.com each morning (like this post), but if you prefer that it come straight to your inbox, you can sign up for the email here.

This has been a year unlike any in recent memory in many ways, but for all the chaos, one of its most positive side effects was that creativity thrived despite (or in some cases, because of) the constraints that marketers faced. We already showed our appreciation with the top ads from all of 2020, but who has time for all that when we’re all busy celebrating the demise of a largely dreadful year? Before you commit yourself completely to holiday films and feasts over the next couple of days, **enjoy a visual feast of 2020’s finest advertisements—in just three minutes**.

Generation Alpha is coming, and they’re invested in the issues that impact our world, including climate change and science. That’s why publishers like The Week, Time and NowThis are launching new youth verticals for this rising generation, investing in young readers who may grow into adult brand devotees—not to mention creating gift offerings that older current readers can share with the younger audience.

The reader of tomorrow: Discover this trend and what it holds for the coming year.

Technology saw a meteoric rise in 2020, driven in part by the constraints of the pandemic, and this shift was especially apparent in the marketing world, which leveraged a broad range of new tools and resources to stay creative and productive this year. Not every tool may stick around in the “new normal” that emerges post-pandemic, but we collected a few emerging technologies that are likely to continue to change the way marketers work in 2021 and beyond.

Dive in: Explore the future of augmented reality, artificial intelligence and more.

CPG manufacturers have had a powerful year, with companies like Procter & Gamble, Clorox and Smucker’s surging as people hunkered down, cooked at home and focused on hygiene amid the pandemic. This boom isn’t likely to decline in 2021—even well into the year—and we have the numbers to demonstrate why.

Explore how newly forged habits will stick around, fueling further growth.

It wasn’t long ago that many people swore they’d never try a meatless burger, but more and more of us are thinking well beyond the Impossible burger now—and beyond the Beyond burger too, for that matter. In 2021, we can anticipate a renewed wave of plant-based options of the future: Record-smashing sales in 2020 have consumers hankering for fake meat, nut milk, egg substitutes, vegan cheese and more.

Learn about the kaleidoscope of plant-based options you can anticipate seeing in the coming year.

More insights into the year ahead:

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