

Editor's Letter: You Have Questions. We Do, Too

When we were living the pandemic in two-week increments back in March, holding out hope that we'd return to "regular life" soon and that this whole quarantine was a blip, our newsroom started filming a daily TV show called Adweek Together. Dozens of guests came on to share their thoughts, frustrations and triumphs in the early days of what we now know as a global crisis.

In one episode, I asked Tiffany R. Warren, executive vp, chief diversity and inclusion officer, Sony Music Group, and founder of Adcolor, for advice on maintaining DEI initiatives remotely, and I'll never forget what she said: "I have to live it first."

We have lived it, reader. More than 300 days of it. And while there are still many unknowns, our editors have dug up answers and smart predictions to questions like when business will bounce back, what it will look like when it does and what consumers are going to expect from us in the long term. I promise you'll want to read and share these insights from our agencies, brands, TV, media, creativity and ad tech editors.

To craft this issue for you, we first logged onto Zoom (what else?) and asked questions for a full hour. If we had a crystal ball, what would we want to know about the year ahead? It was a long list. Then we went to work tracking down answers with the goal of giving you some guidance for 2021.

As we dug up answers and surveyed our community, several themes emerged: The pandemic didn't create trends, it accelerated them—ecommerce sped up by as much as five years. Though challenged, creativity always finds a way. Now that we've adopted tech like AR and video chat, we're never going back. And every type of business has to focus obsessively on their customer—brands, for one, are attuned to shoppers like never before, and agencies are at last tuning into brands.

Look for data, advice and predictions in this issue, on Adweek.com and at our Outlook 2021 live virtual summit Jan. 26-28. And please send me a note with your own thoughts on the new year! I'd love to hear your take, because nothing's set in stone and we're all learning as we live it.

Check out all of our 2021 Outlook coverage here.

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